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THIRTY YEARS, NINETY MILES

LEARNING TO DEAL WITH CUBA

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George Black / The Revolution • Wayne S. Smith / The Diplomacy • John Spicer Nichols / The Congress

Maria Torres / The Community • William M. LeoGrande / The Democrats • Coco Fusco / The Culture

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LETTERS.

TOO PAT

Washington

David Corn and Jefferson Morley's Beltway Bandits item "Schroeder Cuts a Deal" [July 2/9] played a valuable public service in revealing how politics threatens to turn a whistleblower protection bill into cynical doublespeak. But the analysis was incomplete and therefore unfair to Representative Patricia Schroeder, who for ten years has been the whistleblower's best friend in the Federal government.

First, while it is terrible that freedom of speech was placed on the trading block, Schroeder didn't put it there. The White House did, by threatening to veto a bill that has been endorsed by the American Bar Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, all major Federal employee groups, Common Cause, Ralph Nader and some 155 grass-roots organizations at last count. Schroeder and lead Republican sponsor Frank Horton were both responding to the oft-repeated, shrill veto threats.

Second, there is a big difference between attacking the merits of a political judgment call and attacking the commitment of a leader. The latter is not appropriate here. Schroeder has been the Congressional pioneer in creating free speech rights, and for ten years has held regular oversight hearings where witnesses have aggressively spotlighted the growing pains and loopholes of her own legislative creation. And she kept inviting them back. When the Civil Service Reform Act mechanisms failed, her subcommittee staff performed tireless and compassionate casework to help fill the gap.

For three years she has been persistent in advocating whistleblower legislation, which has remained intact until the recent threats. Even then, when her constituency made it clear they wouldn't accept symbolic legislation, she listened and has restored key provisions to the whistleblower bill.

The last point is the key: Constituencies can't expect our leaders to take care of us if they don't participate fully in the struggle. When free speech activists have joined Schroeder's efforts, she has been effective. When we have taken her leadership for granted, we have been disappointed. Should it be any different? Should we truly expect our leaders to deliver more than we have earned?

These comments do not rebut the authors, because they did not attack Schroeder's overall record. The emphasis on her miseries with the whistleblower bill, however, distracts from the real villain of this issue—an Administration determined to institutionalize secret government as its legacy. Since 1981 Schroeder has fought back, and she's on the verge of winning a key victory if her constituency fights as hard as she has.

Thomas Devine
Legal Director
Government Accountability Project

CORN AND MORLEY REPLY

Washington

Devine is right. The real villain of the story is Reagan, whose Administration has provided safe haven to those bureaucrats who target whistleblowers for search and destroy missions. Still, Schroeder, a usually reliable defender of free speech, did surprise all the public interest groups working on this issue with her acceptance of a bill that these groups consider inimical to the interests of government whistleblowers. Legislators do make compromises; they must choose their battles. But that does not leave them immune from criticism. Devine is also right that neither Schroeder nor any other legislator can be expected to do the job entirely on his or her own. They need the political support that constituent groups can generate. Left on their own, they find it tough to buck the tide. That is why they need close watching—which is something we seek to do in our column.

As for the whistleblower protection legislation, a strong bill supported by the constituent groups passed the Senate in August, and in October the House, led by Schroeder, who finally "came through like a champ" (as one lobbyist put it), approved whistleblower legislation that included the best of the Senate measure.

David Corn and Jefferson Morley

THE CATCH OF KOCH'S CAN

New York City

Albert Prago and Stuart Paskow's cries of anti-Semitism ["Letters," July 16/23] regarding Edward Sorel's caricature of Mayor Ed Koch ["Drawn and Quoted," April 30] are apologies for Ed Koch's record as Mayor, pure and simple. These gentlemen quite deliberately overlooked the comments made by Sorel in the cartoon. In other words, they only saw (and read) what they wanted to see. "Contributions From Real Estate Big Boys" and "Photo of Bess (Wearing a Low-Cut Lawsuit)" are but reflections of one of the most corrupt administrations since Jimmy Walker. "Gore's Gore" and "Fits into Mouth Easily" (a caption pointing at Koch's foot) are symbolic of his racist views and attitudes not only toward Jesse Jackson but the entire black community. It is rather significant that both Prago and Paskow saw only Koch's hooked nose and the collection can. The collection can marked "For Planting Trees (and Arabs) in Israel," I believe, is a strong condemnation of Koch's support for Israel's military policies in the occupied territories. As a matter of fact, Koch should register as a lobbyist and propagandist for Israel. And how anyone can draw a caricature of Koch without showing his huge nose is beyond me. To make a comparison with "the Nazi Streicher's infamous journal," as Prago does, is an insult to all decent Jews (of which I am one).

Samuel Kart

WHAT'S A METAPHOR?

Lopez Island, Wash.

The story of Margaret Randall's troubles with the Immigration and Naturalization Service as told by her attorney David Cole in "Deportation of a Poet" [June 25] reminds me of the sign that hung in the Los Angeles I.N.S. office in 1953: "An ounce of loyalty is worth more than a pound of brains."

At that time I found this so absurd I was tempted to credit the I.N.S. with a sense of humor I knew they did not possess. From the article I must conclude that the ideological straitjacket is still very much in place, and I wonder if the sign is also still there.

Oscar Smaalders

VIVA DANTO!

Madison, Wis.

I would simply like to thank *The Nation* for Arthur C. Danto's review of the current Robert Mapplethorpe show ["Art," Sept. 26]. As I don't live in New York City or any major city, sometimes reviews of shows I am unlikely to see can be a source of great frustration. But Danto's review has immense power in and of itself; his vivid description of the photographs in question and his analysis of the aesthetic and moral issues they raise make for moving and disturbing reading. This is a reminder of the power and value of criticism at it best.

Nicola Pitchford

READ ALL ABOUT IT

New York City

The exchange between Cynthia Ozick and Alexander Cockburn ["Letters," Aug. 27/Sept. 3] refers to an article by Ozick that originally appeared in the November 1984 *Congress Monthly*, a publication of the American Jewish Congress. The full title of the article is "The Living Brotherhood, Ishmael and Isaac: A Prayer." For those of your readers interested in reading the complete text in order to make up their own minds on the matter, the article is available by writing to *Congress Monthly*, 15 East 84th Street, New York, NY 10028.

Maier Deshell
Editor
Congress Monthly

CORRECTIONS

In Jamie Kitman and Ruth Yodaiken's "Celebrating (Yawn) the Constitution" (July 2/9), John Marshall should have been identified as the country's third Chief Justice. In addition, the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy was incorrectly identified as being affiliated with the Claremont Graduate School. The two institutions have no connection.

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EDITORIALS.

The 30 Years' War

Fidel Castro's Cuba. "The moonlit fixation in the emerald sea," Don DeLillo calls it in his new book, *Libra.* The novel is set in 1963; but U.S.-Cuban relations remain paralyzed by the concerns of that earlier age. Both parties to the conflict are caught in their own version of a time warp. Thanks to three decades of U.S. economic boycott, Havana can often feel like a city suspended in the late 1950s. Hostage to the enduring myths of national security—and insecurity—the American view of Cuba can often appear immune to change.

It's been that way, some would say, since 1898, when Teddy Roosevelt led his Rough Riders up San Juan Hill and the United States came of age as an imperial power. Since then, in this country's tormented search for its place in the modern world, Cuba has played many leading roles—as gambling den and vacation paradise, as setting for the missile crisis and the Bay of Pigs. Veterans of the 1961 invasion fiasco crop up in presidential assassination plots, at Watergate, in special operations in Vietnam and Central America. When the principles of democracy and empire clash, usually in the form of covert action, a Cuban is often hiding behind the first tree.

If the idea of Cuba has contaminated the American polity, the reverse is also true. Once upon a time, the Cuban political class dreamed of being American: Smack in the middle of Havana stands a replica, accurate in every detail, of the U.S. Capitol. "Even our bad taste was imported," the poet Pablo Armando Fernández once remarked. The point

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of Fidel Castro's revolution was to supplant those long years of imitation, and the revolution's continuing legitimacy, both at home and abroad, has come in large part from its ability to stand up to the superpower next door.

Washington has spent much of the past thirty years trying to avoid a "second Cuba." It has expended much blood and treasure in the effort to prove that socialism, especially in the Third World, can bring only a dismal sequel of scarcity and dogma. In the 1960s, Cuba offered a vivid, humanist alternative to Stalinism, and if there were questions about its democratic failings, well, it still had an admirable health care system. Today the comparisons are necessarily different. It is now Moscow that provides the most hopeful sign of socialism's potential for renewal. But can Cuba's history allow Fidel to see it that way? Or will he hear only the facile and self-interested arguments of his enemies to the north, that *perestroika* is further proof of the historic failure of communism? These are only two of many questions that George Black, who edited this special issue, poses in his report on the Cuban revolution.

Many of the insufficiencies of Cuban socialism today reflect the priority that the island has placed for so long on guaranteeing its national survival. Of course, it would be something of a fool's errand to advise the next American President to offer Castro the hand of friendship as a means of revitalizing the cause of socialism. But rational new policies from Washington can also be advocated on the narrower ground of enlightened self-interest, according to Wayne S. Smith, who knows the wreckage of U.S.-Cuban diplomatic history better than anyone. In two important new explorations of Cuban-American affairs, John Spicer Nichols documents one way in which the tentacles of the Cuba lobby have reached into U.S. domestic politics, and Maria de los Angeles Torres suggests that the Cuban-American community is no longer the rabid anti-Castro monolith that has cowed politicians into inaction for so many years. Finally, William M. LeoGrande wonders whether the Democratic Party under Michael Dukakis is capable of breaking free from its traditional fear of the Cuba issue. Taken together, these articles, by four experts on Cuba, make a compelling case for the rapid normalization of relations between Washington and Havana.

Why make that argument now, and at such length? Because in these final pre-election weeks, there is a larger point to be made: Cuba lies at the very heart of this country's neuroses about its power in the world, and if the United States is ever to shake off the dead hand of the cold war, there is no better place to start than with its island neighbor ninety miles to the south.

The Other Races

In 1986, 98 percent of the Representatives who ran for re-election to Congress won. This static condition was due largely to the connivance of both parties in gerrymandering scores of "safe" seats, to the interlock of pols and other vested interests in maintaining voter passivity, and to the rising cost of visibility—in sum, to the politics of the status quo. This election, a near-record 408 Representatives will run again, many unopposed or with only token opposition.

In a handful of districts, however, liberal and even progressive challengers are testing politics-as-usual and have a chance of success. Many of these candidates would replace Republican conservatives and have earned high marks for their stands on issues such as military spending, *contra* aid, gun control, abortion and the environment. What follows is a list, by no means exhaustive, of challengers who deserve strong support.

Anna Eshoo (California), Martha Ezzard (Colorado), Tom Gilmore (North Carolina), Peter Gruenstein (Alaska), Gary K. Hart (California), Peter Hoagland (Nebraska), Reese Lindquist (Washington), Lana Pollack (Michigan), Rosemary Pooler (New York), George Sangmeister (Illinois), Tom Udall (New Mexico), Jolene Unsoeld (Washington), Tom Ward (Indiana) and Robert Weinberg (Virginia). There are, of course, many incumbents who should be returned to their seats. Five in particular who face tough conservative opponents are first-termers Mike Espy of Mississippi and David Skaggs of Colorado, as well as Pete Kostmayer (Pennsylvania), Bob Kastenmeier (Wisconsin) and George Brown (California).

The established liberal handicappers and Washington consultants argue that electing these candidates represents the outside limits of the possible. But if there is ever to be structural change in America's institutions, the self-fulfilling assumptions about who can win (cautious liberals) and what kind of campaign works (heavy on the media buys, light on voter registration) must be thrown out. Too many of these promising candidates have chosen to run to the mythical center, neglecting the progressive bases in their districts. Such certainly seems to be the case so far with Lana Pollack, who beat the more radical Dean Baker in Michigan's Democratic primary.

Two unabashedly progressive challengers whose efforts, win or lose, are expanding the boundaries of the possible are Faye Williams of Louisiana and Bernie Sanders, the socialist Mayor of Burlington, Vermont. The National Committee for an Effective Congress may aver that neither has a shot, but more innovative groups like EMILY's List, PeacePac, SANE/Freeze and Neighbor to Neighbor are investing some of their scarce resources in Williams's campaign, and Sanders has been endorsed by both the Democratic Socialists of America and Ben and Jerry's. Williams is up against Clyde Holloway, who beat her by 2.8 percent of the vote in 1986, and her campaign is working hard to register and turn out new voters. If elected, she'll be the first black Congresswoman from the Deep South. Sanders, who is running as an independent and is backed by many Rainbow activists in a three-way race against a moderately conservative Democrat and a conservatively moderate Republican, could well pull it off. Sanders identifies strongly with Vermont's poor and working people and, rather than traveling the well-worn road of the "Volvo liberals," is campaigning hard for economic justice.

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G.O.P. Anti-Semites

George Bush may have dumped some of the anti-Semites and fascist sympathizers who fouled his campaign's ethnic outreach council, but the Republican Party still provides a haven for such miscreants, including some of the same individuals booted from the Vice President's campaign. A new report demonstrates just how thoroughly an Eastern European émigré network, with contacts to former Nazi collaborators, has penetrated the Grand Old Party. *Old Nazis, The New Right and the Reagan Administration*, written by Russ Bellant and published by Political Research Associates, makes clear that the National Republican Heritage Groups Council is a linchpin of this network.

The Heritage Groups Council is an "auxiliary Republican group" composed of representatives of various ethnic groups, according to Albert Marrugi, press secretary for the Republican National Committee. Numbering perhaps several hundred members and currently chaired by Anna Chennault, a staunch anti-Communist, the council is on a mission to reach out to and mine various ethnic communities for the Republican Party, which is eager to embrace the émigrés' fierce anti-Communism.

According to Bellant, invitations to the council's 1987 meeting included the following: Florian Galdau, a Rumanian Orthodox priest linked to the pro-Nazi Iron Guard; Nicolas Nazarenko, a World War II officer in the German S.S. Cossack division who told Bellant that Jews are his "ideological enemy"; Radi Slavoff, a member of the Fascist Bulgarian National Front; and Walter Melianovich, head of a Byelorussian G.O.P. ethnic unit, which has had Nazi collaborators in leadership roles. Galdau, Slavoff and Melianovich were all members of Bush's ethnic council. After *Washington Jewish Week* reported last month that the Bush campaign included a promoter of the Holocaust-did-not-happen pseudo-theory and others with ties to fascist groups, Galdau and Slavoff resigned.

In 1985, during a meeting with Bellant, former S.S. man Nazarenko displayed a suitcase containing literature on the "Jewish problem." Nazarenko told Bellant he was in touch with various Nazi groups. "Sometimes when I meet these guys they say, 'Heil Hitler,'" Bellant quotes Nazarenko as saying. A spokesman for the Republican National Committee says that Nazarenko is still a member of the Heritage Groups Council.

Shortly after returning from his visit to the Bitburg, West Germany, cemetery in 1985, President Reagan addressed the council at Washington's Shoreham Hotel. "Believe me, bringing more ethnic Americans into the fold is the key to the positive realignment we are beginning to see take shape," Reagan told his audience of 400. Michael Sotirhos, a former council chair, informed Bellant that 86,000 Reagan-Bush volunteers had been recruited by the organization for the 1984 election.

Reagan and Bush have also given their imprimatur to the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, another home for fascists and anti-Semites. In July, Bush spoke before that group at the Ukrainian Cultural Center in Warren, Michigan. The A.B.N. was formed in 1943 by several groups, including a wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists known as the OUN-B. In 1941, this group branded the Jews "a pillar of the Muscovite-Bolshevist regime." According to historian Alexander Dallin's *German Rule in Russia 1941–1945*, Ukrainian militia, including OUN-B members, assisted the Nazis when they invaded Lvov, in the Ukraine. That same year, OUN-B's chief, Yaroslav Stetsko, served briefly as a pro-Nazi premier of the Ukraine—and when he died in 1986 Stetsko was the A.B.N.'s president.

A 1981 list of A.B.N.'s vice presidents included Alexander Ronnett, a Rumanian anti-Semite; John Kosiak, a leader in the pro-Nazi puppet government of Byelorussia; George Paprikoff, a member of the pro-Nazi Bulgarian Legionary movement; and Laszlo Pasztor, a former member of a Hungarian pro-Nazi party and founding chair of the Republican Heritage Groups Council. (Pasztor recently said he has disavowed his pro-Hitler beliefs.)

To a 1985 A.B.N. conference—where one OUN-B veteran railed against "lawyers of Jewish origin" in the Justice Department who hunt Nazi war criminals—both Reagan and Bush sent affectionate greetings. Bush called the A.B.N. "vital." New York Republican Senator Alfonse D'Amato has praised the group. Two years earlier, on its fortieth anniversary, some of A.B.N.'s members were received at the White House by President Reagan. Bush spoke at the group's anniversary dinner. Other commemorative events on Capitol Hill attracted former national security adviser Richard Allen and then-ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick. A committee honoring the group's fortieth anniversary, Bellant says, included Republican Senators Rudy Boschwitz, William Cohen and Jesse Helms, and G.O.P. Representative Gerald Solomon. Representative Bill Green, a moderate Republican who is Jewish, appeared at the A.B.N.'s annual conference in 1981 and also spoke at a 1984 "freedom march."

Courting these groups is primarily a G.O.P. enthusiasm, but by no means exclusively one. Senator Carl Levin and Representatives John Dingell and Sam Stratton, all Democrats, were also on the committee honoring A.B.N.'s fortieth anniversary. In 1983, Michigan Governor Jim Blanchard and Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, both Democrats, issued proclamations designating "A.B.N. Days." At the 1985 A.B.N. conference, Democratic Mayor Edward Koch of New York City sent his "warmest good wishes to everyone present" on behalf of the city; the state's Democratic Governor, Mario Cuomo, sent a representative to the conference.

When Bush took the stage of the Ukrainian Cultural Center in July, he was joined by one Bohdan Fedorak, an A.B.N. leader and top OUN-B figure. Fedorak was one of seven members of Bush's ethnic council purged in September. Yet shortly thereafter, the Republican Party announced it had "no intention of examining" the extremist background of S.S. veteran Nazarenko or any other National Republican Heritage Groups Council members.

DAVID CORN

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Ideas Men

George Bush's incoherent tirades about "values" in the first debate pointed up, almost more fully than one might wish, the fact that he has not got an idea in his head. For the same reason, he found great difficulty in completing a sentence, hopping like an egret from tussock to tussock of maimed syntax. It reminded me of the debates before the Republican primary in New Hampshire in 1980, when Ronald Reagan, head bursting with the admonitions of the supply-side crowd, showed up Bush then as the airhead he has always been.

Actually RR did a much better job of it in 1980 than Dukakis eight years later, which only serves to underline the fact that the Governor of Massachusetts has almost as few ideas to rub together as Bush and is simultaneously too arrogant and timid to look to his left to find some. If Daniel Bell ever wants to reissue *The End of Ideology* he might consider putting a photograph of Bush and Dukakis on the cover.

I came across an old issue of *The Public Interest* the other day (Bell was head of its publication committee) and was reminded of how prolonged and thorough the ideological preparation for the Reagan presidency had been, when contrasted with Bush's rushed pre-debate briefings or Dukakis's skirmish with theory at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. In this particular Spring 1975 edition could be found Jude Wanniski on "The Mundell-Laffer Hypothesis," William Baer on "The Making of Perfect and Beautiful Social Programs," David Stockman on "The Social Pork Barrel" (the essay that got him the job at the Office of Management and Budget) and Edward Jay Epstein on "The Politics of 'Law and Order,'" which both Bush and Dukakis might care to read before they issue their next summons to a war on drugs.

The evident fact that "Reaganism" has ended up as a series of half-phrases dribbling out of the mouth of the Vice President has been troubling many right-wingers. On August 22 the opinion page of *The New York Times* featured an astonishing piece by Norman Cantor, professor of history, sociology and comparative literature at New York University, which openly lamented the failure of the Reaganauts to consolidate a fascist intellectual framework for their plan.

Seeking reasons for this failure, Cantor said it all boils down to confusion and lack of guts. No ordering hand had settled upon the Reaganite bestiary, which Cantor conveniently lists as "the Friedmanite market economists; neo-Darwinian sociobiologists; neo-1920s modernists; traditional believers in inequality and hierarchy (who never found an effective theoretical spokesman); traditional Roman Catholics; evangelical and Pentecostal (born-again) Protestants; Zionists; exponents of Victorian 'liberal' humanism, and the Bork-Meese constitutional fundamentalists."

In Cantor's estimation—though he affects a tentative conclusion—these were all wandering sheep, vainly seeking the sheltering fold of a robustly fascist philosophy. "It is conceivable," he writes, "that a theory could have been developed to bind all these intellectual traditions in a cohesive doctrine. For example, in interwar European Fascism, there were ingredients for such a comprehensive rightist doctrine, especially as propounded by thinkers on the French right like Charles Maurras."

Now Maurras was notoriously a rabid anti-Semite. Cantor adds, "But the discrediting of intellectual Fascism by World War II, Vichy, Mussolini, Nazism and the Holocaust meant that recourse to this intellectual reservoir was never attempted. And in the early post-World War II years, there was some effort to build upon T. S. Eliot's amorphous brand of English rightism, but nothing important came of it." The eerie thing about these tranquil sentences is that Cantor is so busy repining the inhibiting effects of the jackboot and the gas chamber on the good name of European Fascism that he seems to forget that these same jackboots and gas chambers are in part a consequence of the ideas of people like Maurras.

After a passing kick at John Brademas, president of his own university, Cantor announces that the cultural right has suffered its greatest blow since the "Progressives" of the Wilsonian era imported "English welfare ('new') liberalism into the unique American ambiance."

Nostalgia for fascist thought is not confined to Cantor. Carl Schmitt is once again being given a turn around the paddock by social scientists, just as he was in the early days of the cold war. Schmitt, like Georg Lukács a student of Max Weber, was a paid-up Nazi—director of the University Teachers' Group of the National Socialist League of German Jurists—whose core idea was the somewhat Nietzschean notion that states are organized not for the mutual benefit of all but as enterprises directed against an enemy, said enemy being aliens, Jews, Bolsheviks and so forth.

This was the philosophy of "decisionism," and more recently Schmitt has been finding some fresh support, *inter alia* among the pages of a special issue of *Telos* in the summer of 1987. (For a highly amusing, if indulgent, account of the peregrinations of this journal, I recommend Paul Breines's essay in its twentieth anniversary issue.) From Schmitt we can then travel to the German historians' debate, discussed by Roderick Stackelberg in the Winter 1988 issue of *Radical History Review.*

With this debate, launched by Ernst Nolte in the summer of 1986 in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, we are back in Bitburg country. The assumption offered by Nolte and others is that Nazism, so far from being an expression of German civilization and culture, was actually an import from Russia, which, in both its Czarist and Soviet incarnation, furnished the anti-Semitic and totalitarian strains, infecting the pure spring of German thought. Andreas Hillgruber takes this proposition to its logical conclusion, arguing that German soldiers fighting on the Eastern Front were defending Europe against the Bolshie hordes.

This, as I observed at the time in this column, was the true

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

meaning of Reagan's mission to Bitburg, where he stood amid the S.S. men's bones in silent homage to the hour when Americans and Germans united against the rages of the Red Army. (Since then, under Gorby's tutelage RR has become a Leninist, so he probably looks back on the Bitburg visit with some shame.)

So now, in the interlude between the crisis and the catastrophe, we are being offered the "no ideology" of Dukakis and Bush. It cannot be long before the intellectual crusade yearned for by Cantor will once again be promulgated, more vigorously than ever, in the intellectual journals. The auguries are already there to be seen.

Regrets to Boris

Boris Kagarlitsky, whom I interviewed in Moscow last year [see "Beat the Devil," November 28, December 5 and December 12, 1987], has been given an apology by *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, which published an enormous attack on him by Gubenko and Piskarev this January 31.

At that time Kagarlitsky, one of the leaders of the unofficial left opposition, was accused of attempts at "destabilization" and of being a self-aggrandizing ignoramus without even a degree. Unwontedly, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* announced in its edition of August 26 that Boris does have the benefits of higher education, has been a longtime student of sociology and is a member of the Soviet Sociological Association. The newspaper says it will not again be requiring the services of comrades Gubenko and Piskarev. Two months earlier Kagarlitsky had won a libel suit against *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, thus doing better than Bertell Ollman, who failed in a U.S. court in his libel suit for similar intellectual and political defamation at the hands of columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak. "Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Background Reports" for September 2, from which I extract this information, adds its view that since such articles as the one under the names of Gubenko and Piskarev are written by the K.G.B., "it seems, therefore, that Kagarlitsky won his action against the KGB rather than against the Komsomol paper. It is also possible that members of the KGB do not agree whether Kagarlitsky and his colleagues should be considered dissidents or Communists."

Strength in Numbers

One of the topics mercifully untouched during the Bush/Dukakis debate was Israel and the treatment of Palestinians. I say "mercifully" since any question on that area of the world would have prompted the usual degrading efforts by the two candidates to outmatch each other in groveling expressions of fealty to that country's government. Just as Henry Kissinger urged in his infamous memorandum, this government has now the satisfaction of knowing that the interest of the U.S. mainstream press in giving any particular prominence to the horrifying brutalities meted out in the occupied territories has now waned. Palestinians who three months ago died in headlines now expire in five-line news briefs. During Rosh Hashana Israel released seventy-seven Palestinian prisoners as a "good will" gesture, with Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin announcing at the same time in an interview in the *Jerusalem Post* that 18,000 Palestinians have been arrested since the uprising began last December 9, and 5,000 are still being held.

A reader, sending me a clip of Rabin's announcement from the *San Francisco Chronicle* for September 13, supplied another clip from the paper's edition for September 14, 1986, saying that the South African apartheid regime had detained some 30,000 people since the state of emergency was declared in June 1986. He notes that in South Africa one in every 600 blacks has been jailed and in Israel one in every eighty-three Palestinians, giving a proportion of seven times as many Palestinians in comparison. At least it shows decisionism is alive and well somewhere.

The Laws of Nature

Since this column has touched on intellectual history, I should include a letter taking me to task for intellectual vulgarity. It's from Ruth Hubbard, professor of biology at Harvard.

Dear Alexander Cockburn,

I am astonished that as astute a social critic as you can write the sentence "At least in the sciences nature sets the terms." (*Nation*, March 26, p. 424.) I guess it shows that the ideology of science escapes scrutiny even from radical critics, if they have not thought much about the ways scientists construct nature. Let me say at once that I am not trying to lead you back to eighteenth century idealism. I am a materialist and firmly believe that nature exists out there, not just in our heads. So, no doubt it "sets terms," but not "*the* terms." The nature that the sciences—which means, scientists—tell us about is a nature scientists invent so as to provide the kinds of explanations of it, and uses of it, that the society requires. Societal intentions toward nature are what shape scientific descriptions of it, the descriptions, if you will, are intention-laden.

Just think! The nature science (meaning scientists) explores is not only not random, it "obeys laws"—laws of nature, that is. It operates with linear chains of causality. And it is a machine that can be taken apart and whose parts can be broken down into ever smaller parts without losing anything. Galaxies are made of the same ultimate particles as you and I and the ways the particles come together are not what differentiates us from them. If you are interested and want to read about this, one place to start is with Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature*, which describes how nature became a machine. Another place is volume II of Joseph Needham's *Science and Civilisation of China*, especially his essay called "Human Law and the Laws of Nature," which as I recall is reprinted there as well as in a number of his collections of essays, such as *The Grand Titration*.

What I am getting at is that science and the conceptualizations of nature that scientists explain by means of it are no less cultural products and social productions than are economics, political science and philosophy.

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN AND JEFFERSON MORLEY

■ F.O.I.A. Shock

The increasing use of computers by Federal agencies poses a threat to open government—in particular, the Freedom of Information Act. A new study conducted by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment notes, "New electronic technologies may serve as barriers to, rather than facilitators of, information disclosure." For example, electronic mail, like the PROF computer message system used by Oliver North, "is significant for FOIA in that it allows data to be created, transmitted . . . and disposed of electronically, without paper printouts," the report says. The O.T.A. notes that an increasing number of important agency actions result from electronic mail messages. But these records may never exist physically and currently can be withheld from public view. "If Congress wishes to maintain the integrity of FOIA in an electronic environment," the O.T.A. warns, "the goals of the statute need to be reassessed and statutory amendment pursued."

■ Spooks for Bush

Back in 1984 a senior aide on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence let loose some information that should be reverberating today but isn't. In an affidavit to Congressional investigators probing the 1980 theft of Jimmy Carter's debate briefing book, the aide, Angelo Codevilla, said that "active duty agents of the Central Intelligence Agency worked for the George Bush primary campaign" in 1980. "I cannot now remember some of these persons," he said, "and am not at liberty to identify others by names or positions because to do so would compromise their cover." C.I.A. agents, like other Federal employees, are enjoined by the Hatch Act from engaging in certain campaign activity.

Codevilla, now resident at the Hoover Institution, later revised his affidavit, striking much of that last statement and noting instead that he was "not at liberty to discuss these rumors." The obvious question: If the spooks turned out for Bush in 1980, what are they doing for him in 1988?

■ Environmentalism Starts at the Border

Environmentalists and right-wing ideologues have something in common: a profound distaste for the World Bank. Ecologists have long protested the environmental effects of the bank's programs, and rightists have complained about its fraternization with Communist or socialist nations. But lately the right-wingers have adopted the environmentalists' argument as a cover for their own agenda. Consider the maneuverings of Senator Steve Symms, a leading conservative ideologue and longtime opponent of the bank. He rated a zero on the League of Conservation Voters scorecard for 1987 and 1988. He has opposed strong enforcement of the Clean Water Act and strict standards for pesticides. In 1985 he called for a 24 percent cut in the Superfund. Yet Symms has been championing legislation that would force the World Bank to conduct environmental impact studies for the projects it underwrites.

Environmentalists support such a proposal, since the World Bank has financed projects that contribute to vast deforestation, a suspected cause of the greenhouse effect. Currently, they are lobbying against a pending $500 million loan to Brazil's energy sector for operations (such as a hydroelectric dam) that, according to a letter signed by several environmental groups, "are causing or will cause enormous destruction of natural resources, threats to the integrity and survival of indigenous groups . . . and serious social conflicts."

As for Symms, one environmentalist says, "We don't believe he is a born-again environmentalist."

■ High Kill Ratio

Here's an honor roll of sorts: J. Alex McMillan, Curt Weldon, Dean Gallo and Michael Bilirakis. They are members of Congress, each a Republican, who received more than $10,000 in support from the National Rifle Association between 1983 and 1988 yet voted for a bill, opposed by the N.R.A., requiring gun buyers to wait seven days before obtaining their weapon. The forty-three other House members who topped the $10,000 mark all voted in September to torpedo the legislation, which lost 228 to 182.

The four lawmakers stand as stark exceptions among N.R.A. beneficiaries. According to a Common Cause analysis, of the $1,351,687 the N.R.A. contributed to House members in the past five years, $1,167,908—that's 81 percent—went to legislators who voted against the waiting period. Finding itself opposed on gun control recently by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and other law enforcement groups, the N.R.A. has lately been under siege. Still, their target skills remain formidable.

■ Rolling Back Steele

Two columns ago we reported that Lieut. Col. James Steele, a significant player in Oliver North's *contra* resupply scheme, had been selected for promotion to brigadier general. Then came Senator Tom Harkin. On September 22, Harkin sent a letter to Senator Sam Nunn, chair of the Armed Services Committee, asking that the committee, which must approve promotions from a list of candidates the Army supplies, delay action on Steele until he testifies about his involvement in the private *contra* support network. A Senate aide reports that the committee is expected to place a hold on Steele's advancement.

■ The Early Days of the Drug War

From *The New York Times*, September 23, 1973:

> At the opening of a training course for 42 Panamanian narcotics agents conducted by instructors from the United States, Lieut. Col. Manuel Noriega of Panama's National Guard emphasized that any indifference [to drug smuggling] in Panama was over and pledged a "war to the death" against traffickers.
>
> U.S. officials are publicizing their satisfaction at the latest events in Panama.

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ARTICLES.

CUBA: THE REVOLUTION

Toward Victory Always, But When?

GEORGE BLACK

Havana

Santiago de Cuba, a sweltering coastal city with a proudly rebellious history, has seen a great number of strange sights in these past thirty years. But none so incongruous to *santiagueros* as the banners that hung in their streets this year to celebrate July 26, the thirty-fifth anniversary of Fidel Castro's failed attack on the Moncada barracks, which marked the formal starting point of the Cuban revolution. The huge signs were printed in the unfamiliar, swirling characters of the Khmer language, with a translation in Spanish underneath: "We support the process of national reconciliation in Kampuchea."

Heng Samrin, head of the Vietnamese-backed regime in Phnom Penh, had arrived in Havana a couple of days earlier to big headlines. As metaphor, the televised shots of his welcome at José Martí International Airport were irresistible: the small white-shirted figure being folded into a bear-hug by the bulky form of Castro, dressed in his invariable olive-green fatigues.

By contrast, the arrival the previous week of a new Soviet Ambassador, Yuri Petrov, a fast-rising, 49-year-old protégé of Mikhail Gorbachev, had been given just a couple of perfunctory paragraphs in the official Communist Party newspaper, *Granma*. This appeared to be more than a routine appointment: Petrov's predecessor had been here for little more than two years. Before this posting, Petrov had been First Secretary of the Communist Party in the important region of Sverdlovsk, a job that he inherited from Boris Yeltsin in 1985. The new Ambassador stayed in Havana only a week after presenting his credentials, then flew back to Moscow for a Central Committee plenum. I asked Gennadi Sizov, first secretary at the Soviet Embassy, if his boss had taken the opportunity to meet with Heng Samrin during his stay. Sizov shrugged, "Not as far as I know."

Fidel's July 26 speech, which functions as an annual State of the Nation address, confirmed the sense of tension symbolized by these two arrivals. With his revolution almost thirty years old, Castro faces a fearful symmetry of pressures. On one side is the enduring animosity of the United States, which has now appropriated the language of human rights as its latest stick with which to beat Cuba. On the other lies the example of Gorbachev's reforms, whose emulation would be cited by Washington as proof of the historic cul-de-sac of Cuban socialism. Fidel used his speech in Santiago to navigate between these problems, issuing a ringing assertion of Cuban independence in a world where the sovereignty of small countries seems an ever-more quixotic enterprise. Soon, he told a group of diplomats in jest, they'll be calling us the "Albania of the Caribbean."

There were only a few foreign journalists on hand for the Santiago celebrations, and Cuban officials seemed to be turning down all requests for interviews. Instead, on the morning of Fidel's speech, a Foreign Ministry aide hastened to our hotel to tell us that two "very special" sessions had been arranged. One was with comrade Najmuddin Kawiani, an alternate member of the Politburo of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. The other was with Nicaragua's Minister of the Interior, Tomás Borge.

I remarked to Borge that the Santiago celebration was beginning to look like a mini-summit of Third World revolutionaries. He made a noncommittal response. But when the topic shifted to Nicaraguan-Cuban relations, Borge grew more animated: "If we had to measure a country's solidarity, there would be no measuring tape big enough for Cuba."

Castro's speech early that evening dispelled any lingering doubts about the significance of the occasion: If the fashion for superpower cooperation to resolve "regional conflicts" in Central America, Southern Africa and Southeast Asia meant that Gorbachev intended to abandon the cause of Third World revolution, Cuba was ready to stand by the revolutionaries. It seemed a reprise, though admittedly in a minor key, of the big Cuban themes of the mid-1960s, the days of Che Guevara, the Tricontinental Conference and the Organization of Latin American Solidarity, when Fidel vowed that "every revolutionary movement in every corner of the earth can count on the support of Cuban fighters."

In a minor key, it should be repeated. Instead of arming rebels in Bolivia or Venezuela, as it did then, Cuba now reaches out to established governments. The island was once seen as the *enfant terrible* of world revolution; today it is a welcome guest in polite diplomatic society, Castro an honored elder statesman. Cuba's overseas commitments are numerous but selective; other than in Angola, where Cuban troops have driven South Africa to the bargaining table, doctors and teachers are more in evidence than soldiers.

But Cuban suspicions of the Soviet Union have deep roots, and the desire to distance Havana from Moscow may be stronger now than at any time since Leonid Brezhnev squelched the Prague Spring and Fidel went on television to deliver his painful endorsement. Roles are now to some extent reversed, and the Cuban Communist Party has a number of reasons for feeling nervous about *perestroika*. If Gorbachev's reforms at home are predicated on scaling down foreign entanglements, where does that leave the sacred principle of "proletarian internationalism"? After all, in the wake of Cuba's pitiful history (first as a Spanish colony, then as an American neocolony, the whorehouse of the Caribbean), it is that internationalism, underwritten by Soviet largesse, that has been for Castro the very embodiment of the country's national identity.

That's not all. Gorbachev's economic policies—especially the new attention of Soviet enterprises to the bottom line—

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are likely to pose new questions about Cuba's efficiency as a trading partner and aid recipient. Also, the web of exchanges, agreements and protocols woven over almost thirty years means that Cuba can hardly insulate itself from the cultural impact of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, a point I shall return to.

Finally, after decades of dealing with a monolithic ally, the Cubans are now having to learn how to read mixed signals from a Soviet leadership that is still struggling to resolve fundamental policy debates. The problem was highlighted at the end of July, when Yegor Ligachev (whose traditional view of the "class character of international relations" must be more congenial to the Cubans) attacked the course of Soviet policy abroad under Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

Repeatedly, Cuban officials told me of the difficulties of interpreting Gorbachev's foreign policy. Armando Entralgo, head of the Cuban Communist Party's African Studies Center, complained that a delegation of Cuban academics attending a Moscow conference on Southern Africa last year had found their Soviet colleagues dismally ill-prepared. He bemoaned the low priority that the Russians appeared to be placing on Angola, insisting that the "Cubafrica" agenda was both different and more principled. A scholar from another party think tank was openly hostile to Moscow's "retreat from internationalism." He too was bothered by the uncertainties of this transitional time in Soviet politics. "We don't know who we're dealing with," he exclaimed in frustration. "They don't speak with a single voice." (The Cuban party has an almost visceral dislike of disunity; the fear of the vulnerability that it could lead to has much to do with the Cuban aversion to dissent.)

In recent months, Castro himself has taken a series of thinly concealed swipes at the Soviet Union. He told NBC's Maria Shriver in February that Cuba had decided not to attend the Seoul Olympics in solidarity with North Korea. In contrast to other socialist countries, "We do not exchange our principles for a few gold medals." Now, in his Santiago anniversary speech, flanked by leaders from Kampuchea and Nicaragua, he gave a detailed report of Cuba's military successes in southern Angola that was laced with stinging, if indirect, criticisms of the Soviet Union. A series of tactical blunders had made it necessary earlier this year for Cuba to relieve Angolan elite forces pinned down by the South Africans at Cuito Cuanavale, Castro explained, and "I will merely limit myself to saying that Cuba bore no responsibility for those errors." If Cuba was blameless, clearly the Soviet Union was the guilty party. He added that the decisive factor in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale had been not the Russian tanks and the MIG-23 strike aircraft but "the human factor."

No More Garlic Millionaires

Carving out an independent model of revolutionary internationalism is only part of the story. The main thrust of Castro's three-and-a-quarter-hour speech on July 26 was his most categorical rejection to date of the idea that Cuba might adopt a domestic version of *perestroika* (although the word itself was never uttered, and indeed, as far as I could tell from reading a large number of Castro's recent speeches, may never have passed his lips). "We shall always obstinately refuse to be servile copiers of other people's recipes," he declared, assailing "those who believe that we should do straight away what is being done elsewhere" as "people who lack self-confidence." He proceeded to argue that Cuba's problems bore no relation to those of the other socialist countries: "If someone is suffering from corns, why look for a remedy for toothache?" Cuba's revolution had from the outset defied conventional wisdom and the Marxist textbook: "Fue un camino diferente," Fidel insisted—our path was different—the defiant final syllable of the word *DI-FE-REN-TE* echoing around the plaza from the huge banks of speakers.

If not *perestroika*, what? The Cuban process of reform, first outlined at the Third Party Congress in 1986, is known as rectification—or to give it its proper title, the "rectification of errors and negative tendencies." It is a process full of ironies. After the failure to achieve an impossible ten-million-ton sugar harvest in 1970, Cuba turned its back on utopianism and buckled down to the orthodox Soviet model of economic planning. Toward the end of the 1970s the country began to experiment with some very limited economic liberalization, especially in the celebrated free peasant markets, where farmers—while still obliged to fulfill production quotas for sale to the state at regulated prices—were allowed to sell their surplus for whatever the market would bear.

In February 1985, just before Gorbachev came to power, Robert MacNeil of PBS's *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* asked if it was fair to describe these steps as creeping capitalism. Fidel answered that they were a response to the "idealistic mistakes . . . of wanting to jump over historic stages in trying to get to a more egalitarian society." When the error became apparent, he said, "We rectified this." In a sense, then, the process that began in 1986 is a rectification of the rectification. It is a development replete with villains—some socialist, others capitalist in origin.

The former were the technocrats, those Soviet-influenced planners who rose to prominence during the 1970s, whose demise was signaled by the ignominious sacking in 1985 of Humberto Pérez, head of the central planning agency Juceplan. Castro now derides the technocrats as "tribal witch doctors." He told Havana party officials last December that they had created nothing but "impotence, a parody of socialism." This was an allusion mainly to the quota system that Cuba had learned from the Russians—basic production targets set absurdly low, productivity bonuses run wild, quality sacrificed in favor of the blind pursuit of gross output.

The latter were the petty capitalists set loose by the market reforms. The peasant markets, predictably enough, gave birth to a new breed of middlemen, and while the markets provided an answer to commodity shortages, they also opened the way to hoarding, speculation and price gouging. Similarly, those individuals who were encouraged to compensate for the state's inefficiency in distributing goods and providing services—private truckers, plumbers, elec-

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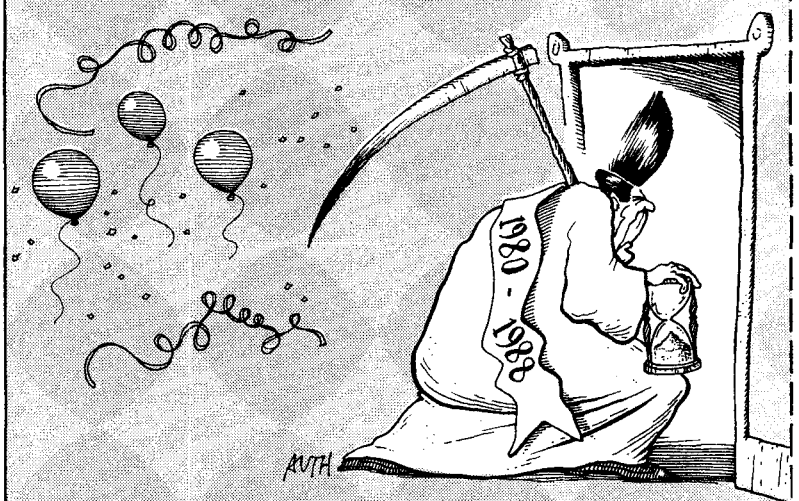
"Humbug!"



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tricians—found themselves prosperous overnight. Almost as quickly they became an object of resentment. "Marginal and quasi-*lumpen* sectors got rich without this bearing any relation to the contribution of their labor to the collectivity," complained Roberto González of Cuba's Higher Institute of International Relations.

At bottom, Castro's anger at the technocrats and the petty capitalists had the same cause: Both groups embodied the idea of money and "mechanisms"—financial, material and technical—as the antidote to the torpor of a centralized economy. Fidel's tolerance of things material is exceedingly limited. The archetypal villain of the reforms, depicted as a virtual Cuban Ivan Boesky, was the peasant who earned $50,000 by selling garlic, an article in critically short supply. Reading Castro's speeches on rectification, it was hard not to think of the Chinese celebration of the 10,000-yuan peasant of the post-Mao reforms, of Zhao Ziyang's freewheeling approach to individual wealth and income differentials; and inconceivable to think of Fidel telling anyone that "to get rich is glorious."

The backlash against Cuba's modest market experiment has tended to invoke revolutionary morality and ideology rather than economic theory. The peasant markets were "shameful," Castro told an assembly of cooperatives in June; the working class had to be rescued before it developed a "mercenary mentality." Worst sin of all, the revolutionary principles of self-sacrifice and communal effort were visibly eroding. At a Havana party meeting last December, Fidel singled out one electronics factory where, "out of 1,900 men, only one volunteered to cut cane in the sugar harvest. . . . Voluntary work had languished, it had become something of a pastime, a formality."

How Long Is Always?

But where does the compass settle? If the 1960s are viewed in retrospect as leading to an orgy of idealism, the 1970s as a descent into mindless technocracy and Brezhnevian sleaze, and the early 1980s as a cautionary tale of the dangers of flirting with capitalism, what is to be done? Ostensibly, Fidel's goal is a synthesis, a search for the ever-elusive balance between moral and material incentives to unglue an inefficient economy. In his vocabulary these days, it's sometimes possible to catch a distinct whiff of that old Maoist standby, "Politics in Command." Yet he has also said—and in so many words—that there will be no Cuban equivalent of the Cultural Revolution.

As so often before, the change of course depends heavily on Fidel's own considerable powers of exhortation. The most visible result, for all the caveats about past utopianism, is a return to many of the symbols and first principles of the 1960s. Since the twentieth anniversary of his death last October, Che Guevara has been the object of a resurrection that verges on sainthood. But is Che intended only as a salutary reminder of lapsed moral qualities, summed up in that elusive concept, the *hombre nuevo*? Or is the renewed posthumous cult of the heroic *guerrillero* meant to provide a blueprint for actual economic policies relevant to the 1990s? Many Cuban intellectuals were privately aghast at the special prize awarded in 1987 to a turgid volume that depicted Guevara as a distinguished economic theorist.

As an example of the rectification campaign in practice, Cubans invariably point to the revival of the "microbrigades," the thousands of volunteer construction gangs who have built apartment houses and day care centers, turning Havana, as a friend of mine put it, into "a scene from a Brueghel painting." But beyond some bureaucratic belt-tightening and a clampdown on petty corruption, it was harder to grasp what changes rectification has brought to the productive sector of the economy.

Today's slogans tend to dwell on the twin themes of austerity and voluntarism—in part, it appears, to stiffen workers' backbones against the wage cuts that became inevitable once the discredited system of quotas and unearned bonuses had been abandoned. Along the road from Havana toward the province of Pinar del Río, through the unbroken, flat green expanse of cane fields, the billboards that line the highway exhort: "The first duty of the revolutionary is work"; "To be a Communist means sacrifice"; "The working day is sacred." The recurrent words are *deber* and *cumplir*—duty and fulfillment. And then there is the most venerable of all Cuban slogans, as inscrutable in its way as a Zen koan: *Hasta la Victoria Siempre* ("Toward Victory Always"). But what constitutes victory? And how long is always?

For Fidel, at least, victory is evidently as remote as ever. He gives the impression these days of fighting a frustrating uphill battle against workers who would rather be consumers than *hombres nuevos*. Revolutionary values are conspicuously absent in the workplace, he told the National Assembly of People's Power in July: "We have a greater tendency toward anarchy, chaos and indiscipline." In his Santiago anniversary speech a few days later, he asked how Cuba was supposed to achieve economic development "working seven, six, five hours a day." Look at the success story of the Japanese, he went on, causing a minor stir in the crowd. They get by on six days' paid vacation.

But it's been almost thirty years now, I said, toward the end of a long conversation with a high-ranking Soviet bloc diplomat. How long does one have to wait for change? He fixed me with one of those long, amused diplomatic looks that say, what I am about to tell you is a parable; it's up to you to work out how many layers it contains. "Listen," he told me. "It's like the Soviet Union and Stalin. When Stalin died, everyone in the Soviet Union wept." He paused for me to digest this. "They fought the great patriotic war for Stalin. And now. . . . " Leaving that thought hanging, he shrugged: "Just read Konstantin Simonov's piece that came out recently in three parts in *Znamya*, and you'll see what I mean." (Simonov, a five-time Stalin Prize winner for his novels, plays and poetry, wrote the extended essay shortly before his death in 1980. It concerns the guilt and shame of Russians whose silence made them complicit in the crimes of Stalinism.)

Whatever the intended parallels between Castro and

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Stalin, it would be unjust to reproach Fidel for lacking the capacity for self-criticism; he is, as Cubans often say with irony, the revolution's only dissident and its only investigative reporter. He has accepted responsibility for the planning failures of the 1970s and the "hucksterish mentality" bred by market reforms in the early 1980s. But self-criticism goes only so far. Then as now, no one beyond a narrow circle of trusted advisers was willing, or able, to question the wisdom of policies before they were adopted. Acclaim still too often replaces debate, and "dialogue with the crowd is not the best form of democracy," as René Dumont, an early adviser to Fidel, put it back in 1963.

The Problem of Dissent

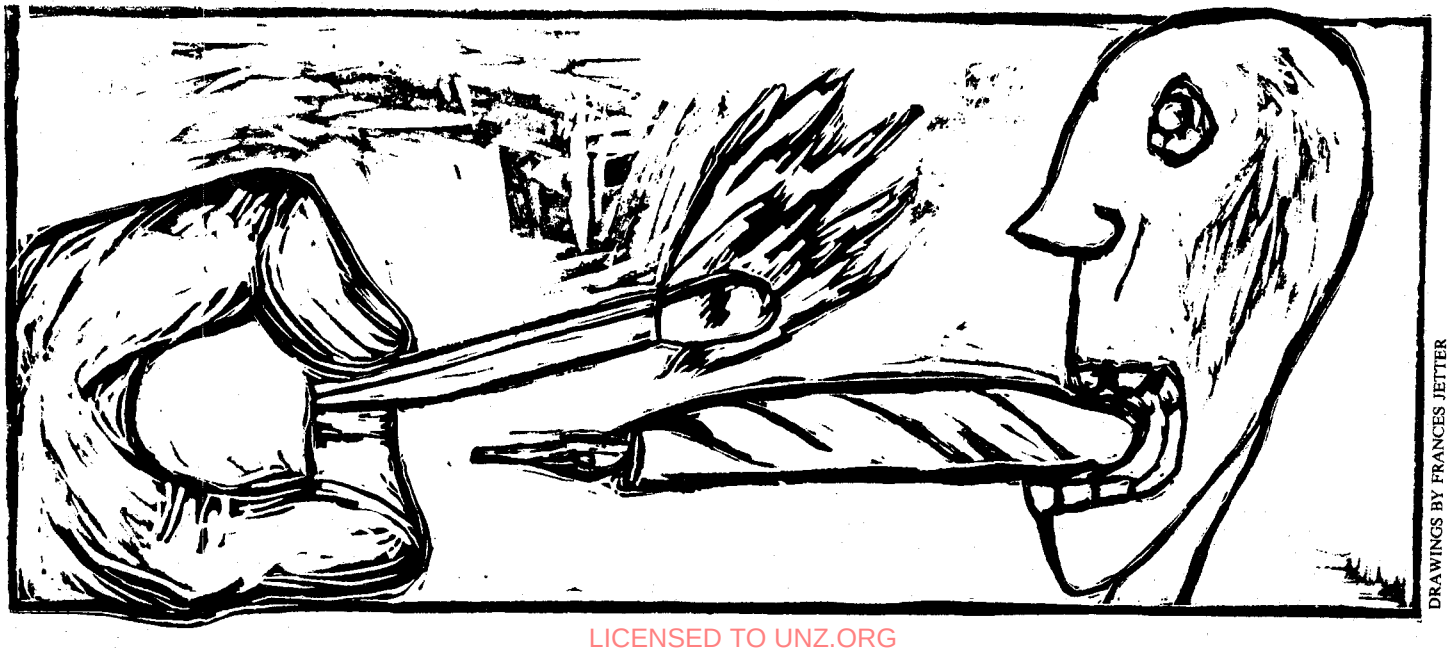
Why does the Cuban revolution continue to show such distaste for dissenting voices? Discussing that point with a number of journalists, intellectuals and party officials in Havana, it suddenly struck me that when they used the noun *disensión*, it was usually coupled with the verb *sembrar* ("to sow"). In Cuba, dissent has customarily been viewed not as something that arises spontaneously—dialectically, one is tempted to say—but as something that is introduced, with hostile intent, from outside. Gorbachev's conviction that "criticism is a bitter medicine, but the ills that plague society make it a necessity" must have the dangerous ring of heresy to many Cubans.

Anyone hoping for signals of an opening to dissenters in Castro's July 26 speech would have been disappointed. "We must safeguard the ideological purity of the revolution," he declared. "Cuba will never adopt the methods, styles, philosophies or idiosyncrasies of capitalism." One-party rule was a greater need than ever, and no one should harbor illusions of creating "pocket-size parties to organize the counterrevolutionaries, the pro-Yankees, the bourgeoisie. . . . We have no need of capitalist political formulas. They are complete garbage." The reason was as straightforward, and as depressingly vindicated by history, as it had always been: "We must never forget where we are located. We are not in the Black Sea, but in the Caribbean Sea. Not ninety miles from Odessa but ninety miles from Miami."

Fidel went on, "I have nothing but contempt for the faint-hearted, the feeble-minded, the weak-willed who fail to understand these realities." Yet the harsh language provoked a kind of dissonance in this listener, for in a number of small ways modest spaces do seem to have opened up for dissent and criticism, like the pockets of air that form in the roof of a cave when a fierce underground stream subsides. If one starting point for any discussion of Cuba today is *perestroika*, another is the independent human rights advocates who have begun to operate in recent years.

A fresh chapter in U.S.-Cuban hostilities opened in 1982. It actually began in Paris, the first port of call for Armando Valladares, released from jail after twenty-two years thanks to the intercession of French President François Mitterrand. Squired around by Jean-François Revel and the good people of Resistance International, Valladares was accorded the same kind of rapturous welcome as Alexander Solzhenitsyn a decade earlier. And just as Solzhenitsyn's exposure of the gulag had given birth to that vengeful coterie of pseudo-intellectuals who came to be known as the *nouveaux philosophes*, so Valladares's account of his prison years offered a new twist on the God that Failed. The phrase "tropical gulag" entered the lexicon; it was now possible to vilify the Third World as well as Marxism. From Mitterrand's France to Reagan's America. By 1986 Armando Valladares was the author of a best-selling memoir, *Against All Hope*; a year later, and without even a rudimentary command of English, he was made an American citizen, in time to head the U.S. delegation to the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

"The revolution has made many errors, terrible errors," exclaimed the poet Eliseo Diego as we sat in his study one evening discussing human rights in Cuba. "But *this*," he went on, referring to the U.S. State Department's recent hallucinatory report on the subject, "this reads like. . . . " He groped for the right literary comparison before settling on Thomas de Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. Although less incendiary testimonies than that of



DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

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Valladares make it clear that jail conditions, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, were indeed harsh, the Administration's blind emphasis on the prison issue, and its reliance on wild, unfounded or outdated accounts of torture and execution, has served to obscure the real significance of the emergence of a human rights movement in Cuba.

Just as the necessary subtext of the Solzhenitsyn episode was the failure of the left to confront the reality of Stalinism, so, behind the smoke and mirrors of the Valladares spectacle, lay some unavoidable questions about the suppression of dissent in Cuba. The appearance of what officials at the U.S. interests section in Havana like to call a "tiny refusenik community" has at least three interesting aspects. Many of the activists, men like Ricardo Bofill and Elizardo Sánchez, claim to have roots in the dissident Marxist currents of the 1960s, the silencing of which at that time defined the limits of what Castro regarded as permissible deviation. In a more immediate sense, the government in practice has shown greater flexibility toward the unofficial human rights movement than the official rhetoric might suggest. Most intriguing of all, perhaps, the activists raise questions about how far dissent can be taken: Are they just a group of former prisoners bound for Miami? Or is their goal to win a more lasting margin of tolerance for debate?

A Conversation With Bofill

A great deal has been written about the reliability of these men's testimony. The credibility of Bofill, president of the Cuban Committee for Human Rights, was picked to shreds in a superb piece of reporting last February by Sam Dillon of *The Miami Herald.* Father Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, the energetic Secretary General of the Cuban Bishops' Conference, says that he applies three basic criteria to any human rights monitoring group: "First, they must be people who are prepared to remain in the country. Second, they must be people with an unimpeachable background. Third, they must be people of enormous psychological fortitude, given the very strong pressures to which they will be submitted. From the outset, the [Bofill] group seems to me to have fallen short on all three counts."

I spent an afternoon with Bofill in his cramped apartment in the industrial suburb of Guanabacoa. He sat in a rocking chair between a painted plaster statue of the Virgen del Cobre, Cuba's patroness, and a Chilean poster condemning the death penalty. Bofill does not so much grant interviews as conduct monologues. He rocked and talked; I listened. Much of his story was riddled with inconsistencies, yet other parts rang truer, especially where his political and intellectual history was concerned.

Bofill claimed that his troubles began as a result of the influences to which he was exposed in Europe in the mid-1960s. "I brought back to Cuba G.D.H. Cole's seven-volume history of British socialist thought. That was when the problems started: I was told in the university that it was a counterrevolutionary work. Then there was Georg Lukács, who they said was nothing but a counterrevolutionary crackpot." In Paris, Bofill claimed, he met the Belgian Trotskyist Ernest Mandel—"such a gentleman, so humble"—as the result of an introduction from Louis Althusser. (A note of doubt crept in here: Althusser and Mandel could hardly have been on speaking terms at the time.) "Mandel introduced me to the work of Trotsky, above all through the trilogy of Isaac Deutscher, which was unknown in Cuba. I came back with the idea of starting a study circle to read these works, which were not available here. But that led me to the Tarpeian rock, where traitors end up."

The years 1965-68 were the harshest for dissidents in Cuba. This was the time of the university purges and the notorious forced labor camps for thousands of gays and other "antisocial elements," chronicled in the wrenching film by Nestor Almendros, *Improper Conduct.* Bofill was first jailed in the 1967 crackdown on what Fidel called the "Microfaction," a supposed Stalinist grouping that saw the revolutionary government as a "leftist adventurist deviation." In fact, it is unlikely that there was a single pro-Soviet plot, as the trials alleged, but rather a number of dispersed pockets of dissent. But the notion of a grand conspiracy made it convenient to sweep smaller fish, malcontents like Bofill, into the same net.

This is not a digression into ancient history. The trial of the Microfaction is important here because it lastingly fixed the boundaries of dissent. As Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy wrote in *Socialism in Cuba* in 1969, those involved in the Microfaction were nobodies. Its leader, an old-guard Communist named Aníbal Escalante, was one of the most unpopular men in Cuba. Why then was so much made of the trials? Huberman and Sweezy concluded:

> The only answer that makes sense is that they were used as . . . a warning . . . to any Cubans who might feel disposed to take positions or express views which could, rightly or wrongly, be construed as aligning them with the microfaction. And even a cursory reading of the documents leaves little doubt that this could, potentially, include anyone critical of government policies or leaders.

These days, Bofill no longer regards himself as a leftist. In his pantheon of heroes, Cole, Althusser and Deutscher have given way to Aron, Dahrendorf and John Stuart Mill. Bofill aims his vitriol at enemies and one-time allies alike: The Castro government he describes as "Stalinism of the Old School." Those he regarded as his possible North American champions—Americas Watch, *The Herald*'s Sam Dillon—have deserted him, dupes of Cuban government propaganda. Searching for the right image to express their treachery, he waved a book under my nose. It was *Mission to Moscow,* the 1939 memoir of Joseph Davies, Franklin Roosevelt's Ambassador to the Soviet Union, who turned a blind eye to the Stalinist show trials. But Bofill's harshest words were reserved for his former colleague Elizardo Sánchez, who now heads the separate Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation. He accuses Sánchez of being a police spy, or—that most characteristic word of the Cuban *exilio—un traidor.* A traitor. But what would Sánchez's motives be, I asked. To sow dissent, he replied. "Sembrar disensión": that phrase again.

Yet in April, when the Cuban government issued a special

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supplement to *Granma* to vilify Bofill, it included a translation of Dillon's article. Not a word was cut. Via Dillon, Cubans read about the execution by firing squad of 5,000 prisoners in the 1960s; about the forced labor camps; about the arrest in 1983 of five trade unionists who, according to Dillon, had tried to start a Solidarity-influenced movement for workers' rights. And they read, in the official party organ, the complaints of a U.S. journalist about Cuba's resistance to *glasnost*. These may be arcane, coded ways for the government to recognize dissent. Nevertheless, they are real.

Another example. Just four days before Fidel's speech in Santiago, Bofill had pressed on me a typed communiqué announcing the formation of a "Pro-Human Rights Party." Although it described the new party in dangerous phrases like "a vehicle for spontaneous social mobilization," it was basically a glorified petition campaign, taking advantage of a law that allows any request bearing 10,000 signatures to be submitted as draft legislation to the National Assembly of People's Power. Bofill's proposal was to incorporate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into the preamble to the Cuban Constitution.

This was no doubt what Fidel had in mind when he lashed out at "pocket-size parties." The language was characteristically harsh: Castro tends to write off the independent human rights groups with phrases like "counterrevolutionary micro-groupuscules." But dismissive rhetoric is a blunt weapon, perhaps deliberately so, and again it suggests a real shift in the political climate. By way of contrast, back in 1981, Andrés Solares, who is now in Miami, was arrested for having unpublished papers relating to the formation of a political party. He was sentenced to eight years for "possession of enemy propaganda."

Eccentric or not, Bofill's party proposal illuminated the dilemma that he, Sánchez and others face. The Reagan Administration, with its appropriation of the human rights issue, is about to come to an end. This summer has seen an accelerated prisoner release program; by the time the U.N. Human Rights Commission visited Cuba in September, only four long-term *plantados*—those who refused to accept prison discipline—remained in jail. Though it would be the cheapest of calumnies to dismiss all the human rights activists as tools of Washington, might they not find it hard to survive the current episode in U.S.-Cuban relations? Did they have any strategy for establishing a more lasting political presence?

The answer appeared to be no. As Monseñor de Céspedes hinted, many of the leaders of Bofill's committee have already packed their bags and left for Miami. Their replacements are often so transparently in search of U.S. visas that the group has acquired a derisive nickname: "the travel agency." Enrique López Oliva, a Cuban journalist who since September 1987 has been publishing a crudely typed newsletter called *Religion in Cuba*, criticizes the human rights groups for being "too belligerent" and squandering the opportunity to become the nucleus of an organized opposition. "Why go looking for confrontation when you can't win?" he asks. "They seem to be seeking martyrdom."

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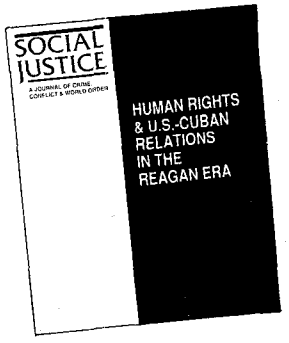

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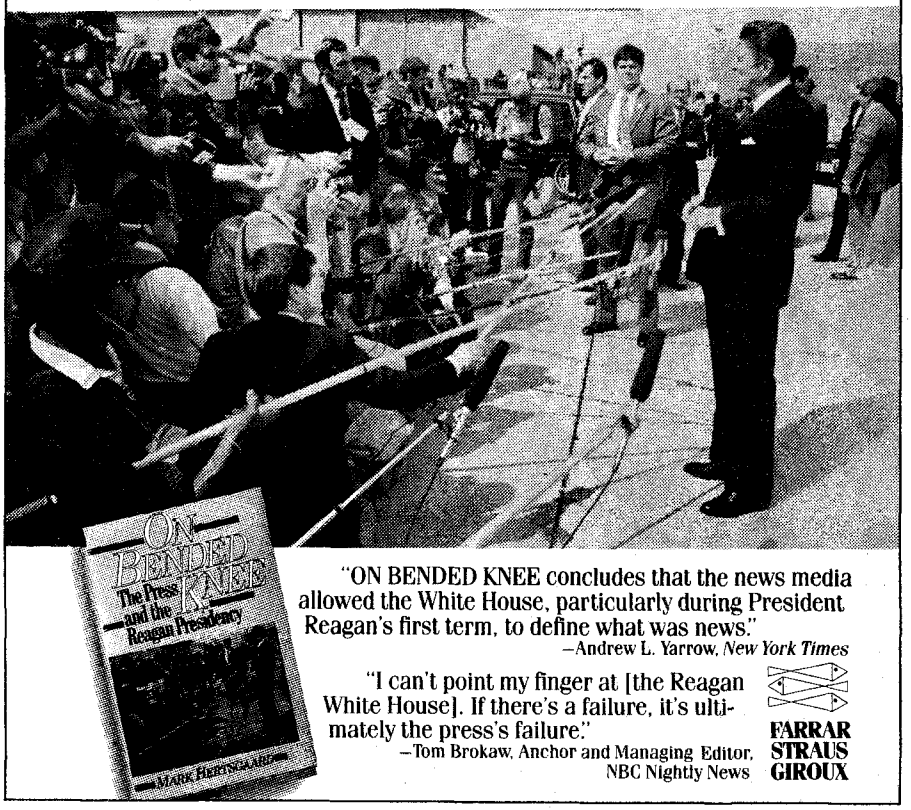
A MEETING OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S FAN CLUB



"ON BENDED KNEE concludes that the news media allowed the White House, particularly during President Reagan's first term, to define what was news."
—Andrew L. Yarrow, *New York Times*

"I can't point my finger at [the Reagan White House]. If there's a failure, it's ultimately the press's failure."
—Tom Brokaw, Anchor and Managing Editor, NBC Nightly News

FARRAR STRAUS GIROUX

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On my way back from Havana, I visited Elizardo Sánchez in his family's modest frame house a few blocks north of Miami's Calle Ocho. Sánchez, who was released from jail in May 1987, was granted an unusual three-month visa to enter the United States with the guaranteed right of return to Cuba. (He went back to Havana last month.) Sánchez said he still felt loyal to the socialist tradition in which his politics were formed: "I believe, personally, that social democracy is a perfectly viable model. The process of democratic reform in the Soviet Union is also extremely interesting, and I hope it can have a positive influence in Cuba." With talk like that, Sánchez has been given a rough ride in Miami. "We're not popular with the radical anti-Castro minorities," he noted dryly.

Sánchez appeared painfully aware of his political dilemma: to remain in Havana, trying to chisel out space for "our slow, gray, unspectacular work, not defining ourselves as dissidents but defending the right of others to dissent," or to enter the wilderness of exile while fighting to maintain some independence from the fierce magnetic pull of the right. His choice is complicated by the fact that his wife and family, including his mentally handicapped 14-year-old son, have lived in the United States since the 1980 Mariel boatlift, which brought 120,000 refugees to Florida. "My heart tells me to stay here in Miami; going back verges on the irrational."

In addition to the Sánchez and Bofill committees, a number of other tiny, fragmentary dissident groups have emerged in the past couple of years. There is a small, informal group of "eco-pacifists" formed after the Chernobyl disaster—"classic European-style Greens," Sánchez calls them—who are opposed to the war in Angola and to Cuba's ambitious nuclear power program. (The first of two pressurized water reactors near Cienfuegos is due to go into operation in 1990.) There is former military officer Julio Soto Angurel, who is said to have served in the Angola campaign and claims to enjoy support in the armed forces. He describes himself as a pro-*perestroika* Marxist. From his apartment in a Havana suburb, Soto produces occasional communiqués under the name of the José Martí Association of Independent Defenders of Human Rights and Reconciliation. Then there is the Martí Civic League, a group of mainly young people opposed to the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo and the Soviet military presence in Cuba. (Adopting the name of José Martí, the nineteenth-century nationalist hero, is almost *de rigueur* in Cuban politics, on all parts of the spectrum.)

No Sacred Texts

One of the more interesting of the flurry of protesting voices is Enrique López Oliva, publisher of the newsletter *Religion in Cuba*. It's a one-man operation, and López Oliva cranks out thirty copies of each issue at home on a battered manual typewriter and a newly acquired photocopier. He is the classic old-fashioned gadfly, relishing his ability to skate on thin ice, springing to his feet during press conferences to grill officials on the relationship between the rectification process and human rights, or rectification and democratization, and then delighting in the blank looks that his questions provoke.

Yet López Oliva declines to describe himself as a "dissident" or his newsletter as an "opposition publication." He speaks instead only of "complementing" the news available through official channels. A gadfly image in public is one thing; open criticism in print is another. Lopez Oliva prefers to convey his message obliquely, for instance by reprinting articles from the Soviet press on the millennium of Russian Christianity and the enthusiasm of the Orthodox Church for *glasnost* and *perestroika*.

His ability to publish is a symptom of the Communist Party's growing tolerance of what Monseñor de Céspedes describes as "a church that maintains a critical distance from the government but never uses the word 'dissident.'" Conventional wisdom holds that the Cuban Catholic Church was always both feeble and reactionary, and that the government's new openness to religion has two benchmarks: first, the 1979 Sandinista revolution, which demonstrated the scope for synthesis—or at least cooperation—between Marxism and liberation theology; and second, a policy shift heralded by the publication in 1985 of the best-selling book *Fidel and Religion*, a series of conversations between Castro and the Brazilian priest Frei Betto.

De Céspedes offers a rather different interpretation. He speaks instead of a patient, respectful dialogue that has shown the church's deep roots in Cuban society. "Despite thirty years of atheist education, the fact is that religious attendance has risen over the past decade. The number of young people in the church has grown. The number of baptisms in Havana, despite the declining birth rate, has tripled in ten years. All this proves that the old slogans about the Cuban Church are false."

He saw the publication of *Fidel and Religion* as less a turning point in church-state relations than "a test by the regime of how much interest there was in the subject—at least for Fidel, if not for other members of the party. The publisher wanted a print run of 50,000, but Castro said no, there was more interest than that. And when the book appeared in the stores, the first edition sold out in ten minutes. So Fidel ordered the print run increased to 300,000. Today they've sold more than a million copies. The government had always acted on the assumption that religion held no appeal for Cubans; the book proved that they were wrong." In the wake of the book, church-state dialogue has registered a number of small gains, the latest being government permission for the church to operate its own printing press.

Did anything in the book come as a surprise to de Céspedes? "Just one thing," he replied after a moment's thought: "The part where Fidel explains that Karl Marx's famous comment about religion being the opium of the people was not a philosophical principle but a specific historical reference to religion as Marx knew it. That's an interesting comment, because of course it's the opposite of official party doctrine. Communist Party cadre schools still use the old Soviet textbooks; now they're also using *Fidel and Religion*. Which creates a certain confusion, because it shows that there is no such thing as a sacred text for Marxists,

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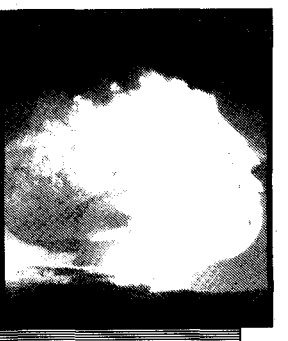

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there's no word of God, as there is for Catholics. Therefore everything is subject to revision, even if Marx said it, or Lenin. Or Fidel Castro."

Glasnost and the Intellectuals

Cuba's socialist model should not only be measured, of course, by the latitude it allows to those who stand, however discreetly, outside the revolution. It's also a matter of the openness that exists within the system, of whether the party acknowledges that the right of critical dissent is a necessary release of captive intellectual energy and a guarantee of social vitality—not an indulgence to be granted, under duress, to one's "class enemies." In his Santiago speech, Castro did appear to acknowledge the existence of dissident sectors within the party, even if he promptly dismissed them as "petit bourgeois" and "second-rate imitators."

Of course, as Fidel says, if you have corns, don't go looking for a toothache remedy. But Cuba's difficulties in part arise precisely from how different its experience has been from that of other socialist countries. The reforms in China, for instance, came as a consequence of the ruinous upheavals of Maoism and a vacuum in official ideology, which "bourgeois liberalization" has rushed to fill. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* are a long-delayed settling of accounts with the Stalinist legacy and a response to the mortal threat of stagnation. But Cuba, until now at least, has passed through no comparable ideological crisis. If the Soviet Union's particular dilemma is to battle the past with the help of a population made passive and cynical by that same history, Cuba's problem may be to develop the habit of leadership and independent thinking in a population that has been carried for thirty years by one man's charismatic energy. Changing the Soviet Union, one scholar wrote, is like turning around a giant oil tanker; changing Cuba may involve bringing some more officers up onto the bridge to offer the captain advice and even, in time, to challenge his orders.

It will happen, though, and Cuba has already become a more ambiguous and complicated society than Castro's black-and-white July 26 speech might suggest. Even if Fidel has never uttered the P-word, he has used the G-word at least once, when he told Maria Shriver, "We have *glasnost* here; we always did." True up to a point: The Cuban arts, for example, were never blighted by the precepts of socialist realism. Cuban intellectual life is also wide open to the new Soviet influences. Thousands of students are in the Soviet Union. And although Cuban bookstores still all too often have the sad look of dumping grounds for Progress Publishers' remainders, with yellowing piles of old Bulgarian party statutes and textbooks on bovine tuberculosis, Gorbachev's book, *Perestroika*, also arrived in huge quantities and sold out in no time. The inability of the newsstands to keep *Novedades de Moscú* (Moscow News) in stock has become legendary.

Alberto Batista, head of the Letras Cubanas publishing house, echoed Castro's remark about *glasnost* almost word for word, although he denied that Cuban readers found Soviet debates particularly interesting, except in economic matters. Then, appearing to contradict himself, he told me that a Cuban edition of Anatoly Rybakov's novel *Children of the Arbat* would soon be published. "But don't expect that kind of literary creation here," he insisted, "because we never had that kind of censorship." If Cuba decreed *glasnost* tomorrow, Batista said, there would be no flood of novels hidden away in secret drawers for twenty years.

Instead, Cuban intellectuals continue to debate exactly what Castro meant in 1961 when he invented the often-quoted formula: "Within the revolution, everything. Outside the revolution, nothing." Being endlessly ambiguous, the phrase is endlessly open to reinterpretation, and it came up again last February at the Fourth Congress of the Writers Union (UNEAC). In an unusually interesting address to the Congress, Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodríguez appeared to put a very liberal interpretation on the old formula. He said that the revolution was "not a narrow path only with enough room for apologists and acolytes," and that the party made no claim to be the "predetermined critical conscience" of society. He called on intellectuals to "cease being a shapeless and subordinate force and become a part of this battle for renewal," and ended his remarks with the intriguing proposition, "Although liberalism is dangerous and complacency is unacceptable, more dangerous still are intolerance and dogmatism."

Between the lines there was obviously some history here, with which I was unfamiliar. "Well," Batista explained, "Carlos Rafael was responding to a dogmatic backlash to a series of critical articles in the press. We live amid contradictions, but there are certain functionaries who refuse to see them."

A battle is under way for the soul of Cuban journalists, and Carlos Aldana, the Central Committee's chief ideologue, while urging the press not to be "docile," has also acknowledged the existence of opposition within the party to the idea of an opening, an *apertura informativa*. By common assent, much of the official press is a disaster—especially the party organ, *Granma*. Mirta Rodríguez Calderón, a twenty-five-year veteran of the paper who now writes for the cultural weekly *Bohemia*, said that while she looked back at the experience with affection, it had also been a professional embarrassment: "We've rejected bourgeois journalism, but we've completely failed to put anything better in its place."

Some papers, like the union daily *Trabajadores*, have taken on limited investigative reports on economic and environmental topics—bottlenecks in food distribution, or the black mayonnaise at the bottom of Havana's chronically polluted harbor. But more sensitive matters, such as inner-party debates, remain taboo. And although some media, particularly radio, encourage feedback and criticism from consumers, there is nothing remotely on the scale of the outspoken letters columns in today's Soviet press.

Some of these tensions appeared to erupt in a series of skirmishes last fall. First, the October issue of the teen magazine *Somos Jóvenes* ("We Are Young") carried an extraordinary exposé of prostitution in Havana—a problem that officially disappeared in 1959 along with Batista and Meyer

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Lansky. The issue was quickly removed from the newsstands, to reappear with the offending article removed. That only created a *succès de scandale*. Copies of the original changed hands, in xeroxed form, at several times the cover price. At around the same time, the planned opening of Juris Podnieks's celebrated Soviet film on youth alienation, rock music and the war in Afghanistan, *Is It Easy to Be Young?* was abruptly canceled, provoking a near-riot in the street. (In an interesting contrast, Tengiz Abuladze's *Repentance*, on the relatively safer topic of the gulag, played to sellout crowds in Havana.)

After the *Somos Jóvenes* affair, Aldana called newspaper editors, journalism students and their professors to a meeting at the Central Committee offices. It was a turbulent session, with the students bombarding Aldana with questions about *glasnost* and *perestroika*—even the personality cult surrounding Fidel in the Cuban media. Castro himself then made an appearance, but was no more able than Aldana to quell the storm. ("Lost for words for the first time in his life," one journalist commented.) According to one account, when the Communist Youth section was instructed to discipline the offending students, it demurred.

In November, the iconoclastic magazine *El Caimán Barbudo* ("The Bearded Alligator"), which is read mainly in university circles, ran an article by another journalism student demanding an end to the press's habit of "accommodation" with official views. This prompted a response from the president of the Union of Cuban Journalists, who admitted that some of the student's complaints were valid, but also spelled out that the party's concept of *apertura* was to be seen as an integral part of the rectification process. Journalistic standards had to be "more revolutionary, more militant, and more communist"—more those of the *hombre nuevo*. The danger in asking for a more critical press was that it "invariably brings out extremist and liberal currents . . . opportunists and resentful people. These tendencies cannot wait. . . . If some appealing formula appears on the international scene, imitate it, immediately." A critical press, then, was not to be confused with *glasnost*.

The Ambiguity of Che Guevara

I never saw much evidence of prostitution in the Vedado hotel district, but I was accosted one day, leaving my hotel, by a young man walking a toy poodle that had been dyed bright yellow. Still pondering this odd encounter, I drove out later that night along the Malecón, the beautiful shoreline drive that sweeps around Havana. Flicking idly around the car radio dial, past the relentless stream of greetings to the fraternal party of Kampuchea and the interviews with vanguard cane cutters, I finally locked in on a flood of noise, which I took at first to be an FM station from Miami. But the signal was too clear: This was Radio Futuro, Havana, and its theme tune seemed to be the Beatles' "A Day in the Life." ("I read the news today, oh boy/Four thousand holes in Blackburn, Lancashire." What did *that* mean in Cuba?)

The disk jockey introduced the next song in a growl that was an uncanny imitation of Wolfman Jack. "And now, rockers, we're gonna give you a dose of . . . " (in English)

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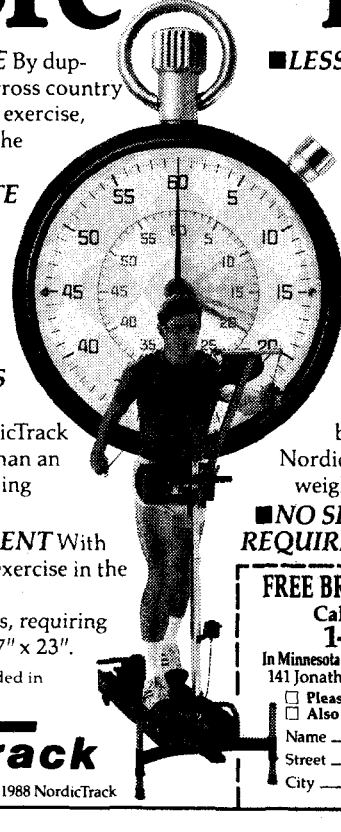

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"HEAVY METAL!!" When the last screeching chord had died away, the group, which was called Amar ("Love"), moved on to an earnest discussion of its efforts to organize an association of rock musicians and have it legally registered with the help of the Communist Youth.

Gerardo Mosquera, who is considered by some to be the "ideologue" of Cuba's new generation of plastic artists, saw absolutely no contradiction between the new youth culture and the goals of rectification. Indeed, the examples he cited were very much in the spirit of Che Guevara, if somewhat revised and updated: A huge painting, as in a game of hangman, of the words, "REVIVE THE REVO_ _ _ _ _ _" (the pun, *REVIVA*, is impossible to render in English), and, written underneath, the words, "add your contribution here"; or a piece of performance art in which a group of young artists, covered in gold paint like the Chibcha king in the legend of El Dorado, leap into Havana harbor in a mockery of materialism; or, at a memorial event for Che, another group simply paints, on the huge screen behind the stage, the word *MEDITAR*—meditate. "In the Plaza de la Revolución!" Gerardo exclaimed, "Can you imagine?"

But there is ambiguity here, too. It's often hard to tell where reverence for Che ends and impatience to open up the system begins—or indeed, whether the icon of Che means remotely the same thing to Cubans born since 1959 that it does to an older party elite that fought with Castro and Guevara in the Sierra Maestra. *El Caimán Barbudo*, which is the paper of choice for Cuba's young artists, seems to have paid little heed to the strictures it received last winter. Its July issue, for example, ran an extraordinarily outspoken attack on "the interminable, leaden disquisitions" that went on in the Writers' Union. In *Children of the Arbat*, the writer said, Rybakov described "a pattern of behavior that characterized Soviet society in the 1930s: people thought one thing, said another, and did a third that was quite different from the other two." The same pattern, he went on, was more and more apparent in presentday Cuba. The conclusion was self-evident. "Defending the essence of socialism means . . . making life miserable for our super-professional yesmen."

It was hard to work out how *The Case of $andra*, the article on prostitution that had caused all the fuss in the first place, fit in here. Was it a case of *glasnost* imitation run amok? Or a clumsy, party-sponsored attempt to be more responsive to the concerns of young readers? Nobody could say for sure, and the text lent itself to either interpretation: It was stunningly frank in its descriptions (and illustrations) of the prostitute's life, yet it concluded with demands for a crackdown, imploring the party to protect "our ideological integrity." Some journalists swore that Fidel himself had signed off on the piece; others said the editor alone was responsible. (He was in fact transferred to *Granma*, the bastion of orthodoxy, and a piece that he had planned on gays in Havana was scrapped.)

Opinions were also divided on the merits of the story. Mirta Rodríguez Calderón found it sensationalistic, the case of the prostitute Sandra nothing more than a "microlocalism." But on balance she thought it had probably been a good idea to publish it. A senior editor at Prensa Latina, the government news agency, disagreed: "This wasn't constructive criticism. Why wasn't the information about prostitutes balanced by praise of our working women, our housewives, the heroic women of the armed forces?" The fact that these heroic women had enjoyed a monopoly in the Cuban press for almost thirty years appeared to elude him.

What would be considered appropriate themes for investigation, I wondered. There seemed no shortage of stories: What, for example, about the *jineteros*, the hundreds of black-market money changers who besiege the visitor in the narrow streets of old Havana with cries of "Chay-money! Chay-money!"? Trafficking in foreign currency can get you five years; the *jineteros* are invariably unemployed black youths, and racism, as Fidel himself has admitted, remains a problem in Cuba. There seemed to be the ingredients here for an interesting study. "Not for us," Mirta felt.

Reluctant to let this drop, I tried another example. The Leningrad Maly Drama Theater had just visited New York City with an extraordinary play, *Stars in the Morning Sky*, about a group of prostitutes who are moved out of Moscow to an abandoned asylum during the 1980 Olympics. It's a thrilling affirmation of the dignity and inner lives of people too long dismissed under socialism as "antisocial elements." This was greeted with a stony stare: "Our people wouldn't find that interesting." Cuba was opposed to this kind of negativism, because it might "damage our unity." In fact—and this time I felt the phrase coming even before it was spoken—it would tend to *sembrar disensión*.

From Monroe to Gorbachev

It must be tedious for Cubans, after long years of being vilified by the United States, to listen to the insinuations of well-meaning foreigners that they should shape up and be like the Soviet Union. But that is not sufficient to explain the depth of resistance to Gorbachev's reforms. It's now widely believed by intellectuals in Havana that the party has taken steps to restrict circulation of the troublesome *Novedades de Moscú*. Other Soviet publications, too, have given offense. Last October, Carlos Rafael Rodríguez engaged in an angry polemic with the internationally distributed *Novoye Vremya* ("New Times"). In an article entitled "Difficult Path," the writer, Vladislav Chirkov, had made some sharp criticisms of the Cuban economy. He catalogued a number of shortcomings, including rationing, high defense expenditures and low productivity. Rodríguez retorted that the article was "inappropriate . . . negative and superficial," and that Chirkov had fallen "into the trap of repeating the prosaic statements used especially by the 'Cubanologists' who live in the United States."

There seemed to be a desire here to seal the country's intellectual borders against the more threatening aspects of the debate in Moscow. Cuba was taking no chances during the special conference of the Soviet Communist Party in June. Gorbachev's call for a limited presidential term, for example, was studiously avoided in the Cuban media, and press reports of the showdown between Politburo members

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Boris Yeltsin and Yegor Ligachev were as terse and opaque as a diplomatic communiqué. A couple of buried paragraphs merely informed readers that there had been a full and frank exchange of views on a number of important topics.

If the logic of this resistance to Soviet influence was implicit in Carlos Rafael's reference to U.S. "Cubanologists," it was laid out with absolute clarity in Fidel's speech of July 26. Any hint of imitation—even of the beneficial examples offered by a friendly power—is anathema to Cuba, a potential betrayal of the originality and nationalism of its revolution and, by strong inference, an act of submission to the implacable enemy less than a hundred miles offshore. Castro said:

> It is not that we want to be more virtuous than anyone else, or purer than anyone else. It's that we are ninety miles away from the most powerful empire on earth, and 10,000 miles from the socialist camp. . . . That is why imperialism tries to weaken the revolution ideologically . . . so that it can swallow us like a ripe apple.

There is a long historical memory at work here. Back in 1823, the year of the Monroe Doctrine, John Quincy Adams declared that Cuba had "an importance in the sum of our national interests, with which that of no other foreign territory can be compared." He described it as a "ripening apple" that "cannot choose but fall to the ground."

It took more than 130 years for Cuba to assert a national identity; it has now spent another thirty single-mindedly defending it. The Soviet Union, the guarantor of Cuban security, has changed; so, with the end of the Reagan years, may the United States—if to a less dramatic degree.

On August 5, just after my return from Havana, I received a phone call from a friend, telling me that Ariel Hidalgo had been released from prison and expelled from Cuba, and was on his way to New York City. Hidalgo had been in jail since August 1981. His book, *Origins of the Workers' Movement and Socialist Thought in Cuba*, had come out in 1976. Afterward he taught philosophy and Marxist economics at workers' schools in Havana. But his conviction grew that the Cuban economic model was in crisis, and, nervous of expressing his concerns openly in the classroom, he wrote them down in an eighty-seven-page manuscript, "Cuba: The Marxist State and 'The New Class'—A Dialectical Materialist Study." Its only purpose, he told me in an interview, was "to define my own ideas to myself."

In essence, Hidalgo's analysis was similar to the ideas that had been advanced in Poland a decade or more earlier by intellectuals like Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik: Marxism had produced its own forms of alienation; bourgeois ownership of the means of production had given way to "nothing more than a formalistic socialism, ruled by a caste of bureaucrats." In 1980, Hidalgo expressed his opposition to the treatment of Cubans leaving the country via Mariel, who were publicly vilified and attacked in mass "acts of repudiation." State security agents raided his home and found his

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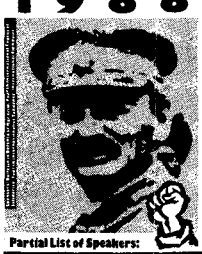

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manuscript, and Hidalgo was given an eight-year sentence for "undermining the ideology of young people from below" and "ideological diversionism."

I asked Hidalgo what he had thought of Castro's July 26 speech, which he had heard during his last week in prison. Had the tough talk against dissent depressed him? "Oh, no," he answered with a luminous smile. "On the contrary, it filled me with joy and optimism. Those criticisms of 'petit bourgeois currents'—they weren't aimed at counter-revolutionaries but at the Communist Youth, at all the people inside the party who see *perestroika* and *glasnost* as the solution to Cuba's problems."

Visiting Havana in May 1959, four months into the revolution, *The Nation*'s veteran correspondent Carleton Beals wondered whether Cuba could simultaneously achieve bread, security and civil rights. Today bread—the ration-cards notwithstanding—is on the table, and Cuba, alone among Third World countries, has not a single child with the swollen belly of malnutrition. After thirty years of honing its defenses, the revolution appears sufficiently secure from external threat to risk the third part of Beals's equation. "After all," said Ariel Hidalgo as we shook hands in farewell, "the Nicaraguans have shown that it's possible to live with dissent, and they face the threat of a real army—not a metaphor." □

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CUBA: THE DIPLOMACY

Accommodation Is In the U.S. Interest

WAYNE S. SMITH

The normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba, when it comes, is likely to be a far less dramatic event than most Americans expect. Objectively, there is no reason why we could not re-establish relations right now—or not have done so years ago. Recognition is not even an issue. We extended that to the government of Fidel Castro in January 1959, and through the ensuing years have continued to deal with it as the legitimate government of Cuba. In January 1961, under the tense circumstances of the moment, we suspended diplomatic relations. But the failure to resume them has more to do with the peculiarly emotional content of the U.S.-Cuban relationship than with any concrete impediment. The United States does, after all, maintain full diplomatic relations with a whole range of governments which it dislikes and with which it has serious disagreements. If we can have embassies in the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Chile, South Africa, Afghanistan and even Nicaragua, why not in Cuba?

Formal relations or not, we have never been without diplomatic channels through which we could communicate with the Cubans. From 1961 until 1977, the Swiss looked after U.S. interests in Cuba and kept the channels open. In 1977, with the establishment of a U.S. interests section in Havana, those functions were once again taken over by the United States itself. Indeed, since that time we have had diplomatic relations in all but name. The interests section does everything an embassy would do except fly the flag and call its chief "ambassador." (Instead, he is a "chief of mission.")

Making those symbolic changes would not be meaningless, but unless accompanied by a more fundamental change of attitude on the part of the U.S. government, it would not necessarily bring any substantive improvement in relations. The United States has full diplomatic relations with Nicaragua, but that has not kept it from mining Nicaraguan harbors, bombing airfields and, for almost eight years, carrying on a surrogate war against that country.

Rather than worrying about the symbols, then, we would be better advised to concentrate on the substance. Or, put another way, the crux of the matter lies not in formalizing

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Wayne S. Smith was chief of the U.S. interests section in Havana from 1979 to 1982; before he left the Foreign Service in 1982 over disagreements with the Reagan Administration's policies, he was recognized as the State Department's leading expert on Cuba. Now adjunct professor of Latin American studies at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, he is the author of The Closest of Enemies: A Personal and Diplomatic History of the Castro Years *(Norton).*

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the channels of communication but in what we communicate. There are a whole series of disagreements between the United States and Cuba, and what is needed is a coherent negotiating process to address them. The Cubans have for many years indicated their willingness to sit down at the negotiating table. Strangely, the United States has until now shown little interest in testing Cuba's seriousness of purpose. And yet, resolution of most of the problems would benefit the United States as much as Cuba—in some instances even more. For example, Cuba says it is prepared to negotiate a compensation agreement for U.S. citizens whose properties were confiscated in the 1960s. The United States has not responded. Also, Washington complains of Cuban involvement in Central America, yet refuses to discuss with Cuba either the overall problem or those aspects of Cuba's role it finds most troublesome. That makes little sense.

Not all disagreements can be resolved readily, and the United States and Cuba are unlikely to develop warm, cordial relations. Their two political systems and world views are too different for that. Cuba is a Marxist-Leninist state and is likely to remain one; it is the ally of our principal global rival, the Soviet Union, and is likely to remain one. But even adversaries frequently find that accommodation serves their respective interests more than does confrontation.

Whatever the logic of the initial U.S.-Cuban disengagement, none of the arguments against re-engagement any longer hold water. For most of the 1960s, the United States believed (or hoped) that the Castro government would prove transitory, and did nothing that might dilute that prospect, such as entering into negotiations with Cuba—which would have eased Cuba's isolation and conferred new legitimacy on the Cuban government. But almost thirty years have now gone by. Clearly, Castro's revolution is here to stay, and it is high time we acknowledged that fact.

Likewise, while efforts to isolate Cuba may have made sense in 1962 or 1967, today they are absurd. Cuba is not isolated. It maintains diplomatic and trade relations with over 110 countries, including all our NATO allies, and now with the majority of Latin American states as well.

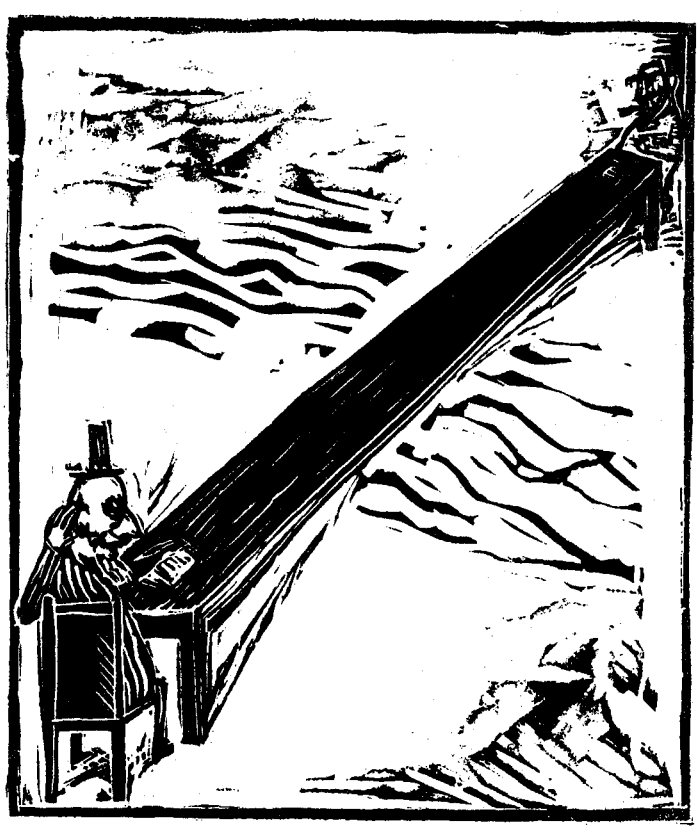
That fact also explodes the argument frequently advanced by right-wing Cuban exiles that Castro is so fanatical, so irrational, that it would be impossible to conduct business with him in a sensible, productive way. The reality is that over a hundred other governments are conducting such business with him. Are the right-wing exiles suggesting that Americans are less competent than other nationalities, that U.S. diplomacy is less effective?

Another frequently heard argument is that U.S. public opinion is so strongly opposed to negotiations with Castro that re-engagement would be political suicide for any President. But this is a misperception. If it was ever true, it certainly has not been for at least a decade. Polls taken in 1977, before the Carter Administration began its opening to Cuba, indicated that while the majority of Americans had a low opinion of the Castro government, they had no objections to negotiating with it. A poll taken earlier this year reflected essentially the same picture.

One of the most persistent arguments against re-engagement and negotiation is that President Carter tried such an approach and it failed. While Carter talked, the argument runs, Castro increased Cuban troop strength in Angola and went into Ethiopia; Carter offered negotiations and Castro responded with the Mariel boatlift.

In fact, the failure of the Carter opening resulted not from our willingness to negotiate but precisely from our failure to do so. The Carter Administration's style, for example, was simply to demand that, irrespective of anything the South Africans might do, Castro remove his troops from Angola. At no time did the Administration make any effort to launch the kind of multilateral negotiating process that has been undertaken recently by Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker. Nor did the United States ever discuss the situation in Ethiopia with Cuba. Rather, it let the Cubans and Russians think that the United States had decided to back Somalia in its quest to retake the Ogaden desert from Ethiopia. When Somalia invaded, Moscow and Havana, thinking the United States was behind it, were quicker than they might otherwise have been to come to Ethiopia's assistance. The United States then condemned not the aggressor—Somalia—but Cuba and the Soviet Union, for aiding the victim!

Mariel is another case in point. In the preceding months, the Cubans had on several occasions urged talks on migration matters. The United States did not respond. And between October 1979 and April 1980, when the Mariel exodus got started, there had been a spate of boat hijackings from Cuba. The Cuban government protested and asked Washington to define its position. Cuba, after all, was cooperating in efforts against aerial hijackings, arresting and trying hijackers and immediately returning the planes and passengers. The United States, on the other hand, neither arrested



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nor tried maritime hijackers. Did that mean the United States condoned such terrorist acts on the high seas, the Cubans wanted to know.

The United States never even responded to Cuban inquiries on the subject. In February 1980, and again that March, Cuban officials warned that unless the United States defined its position, Cuba might take retaliatory measures, which could include allowing large numbers of Cubans to go by small boat to Florida. As one senior Cuban official put it: "If your government wants people in small boats, we can give you more than you bargained for." The Carter Administration simply ignored the warnings—yet was surprised when the Cubans carried out their threat and opened Mariel.

No omission on our part justified Mariel. Whatever we had done—or not done—dumping 125,000 undocumented aliens on U.S. shores was an inhumane and politically unwise overreaction. But it illustrates that, rather than examples of the failure of diplomacy, Mariel, Angola and Ethiopia were all prime cases of what happens when diplomacy is eschewed. In those few instances in which the Carter Administration agreed to negotiate with the Cuban government (on such issues as cooperation between the two Coast Guards, the establishment of maritime boundaries and the release of political prisoners), it found Havana ready to negotiate seriously and to live up to commitments thereby entered into. The tragedy was that the Carter Administration's agenda was so limited.

The Reagan Administration took office hurling threats at Cuba and refusing to negotiate anything. This accomplished nothing. Finally, in late 1984, the Administration agreed to explore various issues having to do with the movement of people between the two countries. As part of the resulting agreement, Cuba committed itself to taking back a number of criminals and other excludables who had arrived in Florida during the Mariel sealift, and also to respect U.S. immigration laws. The United States, in turn, agreed to establish a normal flow of immigration from Cuba.

Unfortunately, only five months after the agreement was signed, the Administration chose to put Radio Martí on the air. Castro viewed this as a provocative act inconsistent with the spirit of the migration accord, and therefore suspended the agreement. Only in 1987 did he offer to resume it, provided the United States would discuss with Cuba the whole question of radio broadcasting—most specifically, the possibility of making a channel, or channels, available to Cuba so that it could broadcast to the United States.

The Reagan Administration accepted Castro's offer. The migration agreement was resumed and the talks on radio broadcasting got under way. This seemed to produce a subtle change in the U.S. approach to Cuba. The Administration's rhetoric remained as uncompromising as ever (President Reagan recently declared, for example, that the gulf between Cuba and the United States is "unbridgeable"), but in addition to the radio talks it went on to discuss a number of consular matters with the Cubans, and in February brought about the ongoing negotiations among Cuba, Angola and South Africa. Those talks show some promise of bringing about a comprehensive settlement in southern Africa.

Thus, the Reagan Administration winds up its eight years doing what it said it would never do: negotiate with Havana. The number of issues under discussion remains small, but the change in approach is significant. And what the change suggests, more than anything else, is that the logic for negotiations and re-engagement is so compelling that not even the Reagan Administration has been able to resist it. Moreover, whatever may be said during the current election campaign, the trend toward negotiations will probably be continued or even expanded by the next President, whether that turns out to be Michael Dukakis or George Bush.

What might the agenda look like? Probably it would be best to begin by discussing several relatively noncontroversial issues of a strictly bilateral nature, such as the reestablishment of normal air service between the two countries, measures to avoid interference in one another's radio channels and cooperation between the two Coast Guards.

Having thus broken the ice, the two governments could go on to negotiate an agreement to cooperate in interdicting narcotics trafficking and exchange views on the situation in Central America. Ideally, the latter would result in a joint statement in which both commit themselves fully to respect the provisions of the Arias peace plan or any other arrangement worked out by the Central Americans themselves to halt armed conflicts in the area.

In this improved atmosphere, the two might then sit down to forge an accord on compensation for former U.S. property owners in Cuba and a timetable for lifting the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba. These two issues are so closely related that it would be advisable—even necessary—to negotiate them and announce agreement simultaneously. Indeed, Cuba is not likely to be in a position to pay compensation without the establishment of some kind of escrow account related to its exports to the United States.

As this negotiating process unfolded, the two sides would gain more confidence in each other, and public opinion would be prepared for the re-establishment of diplomatic relations—which, as suggested in the opening sentence, is likely to come as something of an anticlimax. In time, Cuba and the United States could grapple with the more sensitive issues, such as the deployment of Soviet Bear reconnaissance aircraft in Cuba and the continued presence of the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo.

Clearly, one objective the United States would have in reengaging with Cuba would be to bring about the reduction of Soviet influence and presence. This, however, could be accomplished only in increments and over a long period of time. It is not something that could be demanded as a precondition—which is the way the United States has too often approached the matter in the past. In fact, we have tended to approach the whole Cuban equation in that way, suggesting that Cuba must make sweeping adjustments as a precondition to negotiations. But any Cuban concessions would have to come as the *result* of negotiations and doubtless would be accompanied by some of our own. Indeed, after thirty years it ought now to be clear that it is only through negotiations that the United States can achieve its objectives in Cuba. It is long past time to begin the process—

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not because we have decided we like Fidel Castro but in the interests of the United States itself. □

CUBA: THE CONGRESS

The Power of the Anti-Fidel Lobby

JOHN SPICER NICHOLS

Since its establishment in 1981 the Cuban American National Foundation (C.A.N.F.) has been one of the most effective lobbies in Washington. Its extraordinary success in persuading Congress to underwrite a host of Castro-bashing activities is due in no small part to the lobby's lavish funding of the political campaigns of anti-Castro candidates, to slick propaganda and to a willingness to brand its opponents as Communist sympathizers.

While there is nothing particularly unusual about this style of Washington power-politics, the C.A.N.F. has an unfair advantage that violates the spirit if not the letter of Federal law. Federal Election Commission records and other documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act indicate that the foundation's efforts to manipulate the debate on U.S.-Cuban relations and other issues are indirectly subsidized by taxpayers' dollars.

The private, tax-exempt foundation has received Federal grants that were ostensibly designed to support the development of democracy abroad, but was able to skirt laws that prohibit the use of such funds for political campaigns or propaganda in the United States. In effect, U.S. taxpayers have been unknowingly picking up the tab for a political fringe group's lobbying of elected representatives, who in turn appropriate additional public funds to support the organization's narrow political goals.

The central figure in this hustle is Jorge Más Canosa, founder and chair of the C.A.N.F. A wealthy Miami businessman and virulent anti-Castro activist with close connections to the Reagan Administration, Más has become, according to *The Miami Herald*, "The most powerful Cuban exile in America." According to the newspaper, Más hopes to use that power to overthrow the regime of Fidel Castro and become president of Cuba himself.

Más is a veteran of the Bay of Pigs fiasco and the subsequent Central Intelligence Agency–backed operations against the Cuban government during the 1960s. However, his role as a bit player in the Iran/*contra* scandal notwithstanding, he has increasingly emphasized political action rather than paramilitary action to unseat Castro. By the 1980s, Más had cultivated alliances with key Administration and Congressional leaders, enabling his foundation to wield tremendous influence on U.S. policy toward Cuba.

He quickly developed solid relations with the Reagan White House and Capitol Hill Republicans, but gaining leverage in the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives was more complex. However, by both a quirk of circumstance and an effective carrot-and-stick strategy, Más and his foundation were able to enlist the support of Rep. Dante Fascell, the powerful chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. In that position, Fascell can make or break legislation relating to Cuba; but to retain the chair, the South Florida Democrat must win re-election every other year in a district where Cuban-Americans are a potent voting bloc and Más is the *caudillo*.

Although Fascell is normally identified with moderate foreign policy positions, he has been a strong supporter of the foundation's hard line on U.S.-Cuban relations. For example, Fascell supplied considerable muscle to win Congressional approval of Radio Martí, the keystone of the C.A.N.F.'s legislative agenda during the early Reagan years.

In 1983, Fascell was a member of the bipartisan study group that recommended the creation and Federal funding of the National Endowment for Democracy. The outgrowth of a proposal made by President Reagan in a 1982 speech to the British Parliament, the endowment was envisioned as an apolitical mechanism for making Federal grants to private organizations working to advance democracy abroad.

Fascell introduced the enabling legislation, chaired the House subcommittee that reported out the bill and, as floor manager, guided the legislation through a minefield of opposition. Congress passed the bill in late 1983, but only after including provisions that prohibit the use of endowment funds for domestic partisan politics and propaganda and that make N.E.D. operations subject to public disclosure under the F.O.I.A. When the N.E.D. opened its doors for business, Fascell was the first to direct its board, although he resigned a few months later after moving up to chair the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He continues as a member of the endowment's board.

One of the first grants awarded by the new endowment was to the Cuban American National Foundation, "to gather and disseminate information about the human rights situation in Cuba." To date, the foundation has received a total of $390,000 in Federal funds from the N.E.D. Although the deliberations of N.E.D. directors are held out of the public eye in executive session, an endowment spokeswoman confirmed that Fascell has voted for grants to the C.A.N.F. on at least three occasions. He was absent and did not vote on the most recent renewal of the grant.

During roughly the same time period, the political action committee created by C.A.N.F. directors has donated a nearly identical amount of money to the campaigns of scores of political candidates for Federal office, including Fascell. According to the Federal Election Commission, the National Coalition for a Free Cuba Inc.—later reorganized into the Free Cuba PAC Inc.—has reported contributions totaling $385,400 between 1983 and 1988. The PAC's war chest comes largely from the directors of the foundation, who must contribute $10,000 a year for a seat on the foundation board. A pledge of $5,000 a year is required for membership in the PAC. According to F.E.C. records for the

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1987-88 reporting period, Más and his wife each gave the PAC $10,000 (the maximum individual amount allowed under the election laws).

The records also show that the Cuba lobby has been one of the largest and most consistent contributors to Fascell's political campaigns. Since 1983, his re-election committees have received $16,500 from the PAC and many thousands more in individual contributions from Más and other foundation directors. For example, during the 1985-86 reporting period, a time of intense Washington activity on several issues of importance to the Cuban-American community, nine C.A.N.F. trustees and directors, including Más, contributed a total of $9,161 to the Fascell campaign.

These figures do not include the many cocktail parties and fund-raisers that foundation members have held in Fascell's behalf. At one recent political event in Miami, according to a *Miami News* reporter who covers the Cuban community, Fascell compared Más with Cuba's foremost national patriot, describing him as "the second José Martí."

In a recent interview, Fascell firmly denied any conflict of interest and noted that he had, for example, strongly supported the economic embargo of Cuba long before the creation of the C.A.N.F. and the Free Cuba PAC. However, he added, "now that the issue has been raised," he would either abstain from future votes for C.A.N.F. grants or refuse additional contributions from its PAC, "in order to eliminate any possibility of an appearance of a conflict."

The only other elected official on the board of the National Endowment for Democracy, Republican Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, also voted for the Federal grants to the C.A.N.F. Although he received campaign contributions from the PAC during the 1981-82 reporting period, he has not accepted any such contributions since he joined the N.E.D. board.

Other recipients of Cuban-American largesse are:

§ Senator Paula Hawkins, the Florida Republican who was the prime sponsor of the Radio Martí legislation in the Senate; she received tens of thousands of dollars from the PAC and individual foundation directors to finance her unsuccessful 1986 re-election bid.

§ Senator Ernest Hollings, the South Carolina Democrat, a leading backer of TV Martí (the recently approved sequel to Radio Martí); he received $5,000 from the PAC and sizable supplements from foundation directors for his 1986 re-election.

§ Representative Claude Pepper of Florida, a Democrat; he spearheaded the repeal of the Clark amendment, a Congressional ban on military aid to the Angolan Unita rebels, at the request of Más. Since 1983, the PAC has contributed $20,000 to his campaigns, and Más and his wife have added $2,500 in individual contributions.

§ Republican Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, veteran Castro-hater; he received $10,000—the maximum allowed under the election laws—from the PAC for his 1984 re-election.

§ The two vice-presidential nominees, Democrat Lloyd Bentsen of Texas and Republican Dan Quayle of Indiana; they received $10,000 and $1,000, respectively, for their most recent Senate re-election campaigns.

§ Vice President George Bush, who has accepted the maximum legal contributions for his presidential bid from Más and other C.A.N.F. directors acting as individuals. They similarly supported Reagan's re-election campaign in 1984.

"Political contributions do talk," a foundation director told *The Miami Herald*. "We have changed votes with political contributions."

In creating the National Endowment for Democracy, Congress specifically said that no part of N.E.D. assets "shall inure to the benefit of any member of the Board," that N.E.D. funds may not be used to finance U.S. political campaigns and that no grants can be made to organizations "engaged in partisan activities . . . on behalf of any candidate for public office."

However, because the Cuban American National Foundation and its PAC are separate legal entities with separate bank accounts, the Cuba lobby may not have technically violated these provisions. Obviously, when the C.A.N.F. gets a windfall of N.E.D. grants to carry out activities that the foundation would have supported through internal channels, a greater percentage of its existing funds are freed up for use by the PAC. But, according to legal experts, as long as none of the actual N.E.D. dollars go directly to the PAC, no law is broken.

Congress also intended that N.E.D. funds be used only for activities outside the United States. The standard N.E.D. contract, which C.A.N.F. officials signed, specifically prohibits the use of any portion of the Federal grants

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for "lobbying or propaganda which is directed at influencing public policy decisions of the Government of the United States." (Signing the 1986 contracts for the foundation was its president, José Sorzano. Shortly afterward, Sorzano became senior director for Latin American affairs at the National Security Council, a post he resigned earlier this year to protest that the new N.S.C. leadership appointed after the Iran/*contra* scandal broke was not sufficiently tough in its policies on Cuba and Central America. Signing the contract for the endowment was its president, Carl Gershman. Both Gershman and Sorzano served concurrently as top aides to Jeane Kirkpatrick when she was U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.)

To circumvent the Congressional restrictions, the C.A.N.F. sought N.E.D. grants from 1983 on to create and finance the European Coalition for Human Rights in Cuba, a Madrid-based organization that disseminates information about alleged human rights violations in Cuba. Officials of the Cuban American National Foundation recruited the controversial Armando Valladares, who had recently been released from a Cuban jail, to head the coalition. To conservatives, Valladares is a poet who was jailed and tortured by the Castro regime because of his political views. To the Cuban government and its supporters, he was a police thug during the Batista dictatorship who feigned disability and invoked his status as a writer in pleas to international human rights groups in order to win his release from a prison sentence for "acts of public destruction and sabotage."

In either case, Valladares was prohibited by the terms of the N.E.D. contract from lobbying in the United States. Yet in 1985 and 1986, while receiving a hefty salary from the N.E.D. grants, Valladares testified before Congressional subcommittees, spoke on a Texas college campus and helped collect signatures of writers and intellectuals on a letter to President Reagan urging aid for the Nicaraguan *contras.* Valladares openly reported these activities to the N.E.D., but his grant was repeatedly renewed. More recently, and while still on the N.E.D. dole, Valladares helped produce *Nobody Listened*, a film about human rights abuses in Cuba that was widely shown in the United States.

Foundation officials also played a crucial role in the subsequent appointment of Valladares as head of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, where he sought international support for an investigation of Cuba's human rights record. "The foundation was never that interested in human rights except as a way of hitting Castro on the head," Frank Calzón, longtime C.A.N.F. executive director, told *The Miami Herald.* Calzón is one of a growing number who have recently resigned from the foundation after clashing with Chairman Más.

The documents obtained for this article under the F.O.I.A. do not clarify the extent of direct White House involvement in the activities of the Cuban-American group. *The Miami Herald* reported last April 11 that shortly after Reagan won the presidency in 1980, his first national security adviser, Richard Allen, quietly urged Cuban exiles to form a Washington lobby. A year later, the President signed National Security Decision Directive 17, a plan for covert operations

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in Central America that noted that U.S. and European public opinion "jeopardize[d]" the Administration's policy of confrontation with Cuba and Nicaragua and ordered the following remedy: "Build public pressure against Cuba by highlighting human and political rights issue. Use international Cuban community to carry the message."

Regardless of where the impetus came from, the Cuban American National Foundation has successfully thwarted any attempt during the 1980s to explore alternatives to the quarrelsome relations between Cuba and the United States. With the continuation of Federal grants that subsidize its anti-Castro propaganda and lobbying, the foundation is well positioned to affect the foreign policy process long after the Reagan Administration has passed into history. □

CUBA: THE COMMUNITY

Working Against The Miami Myth

MARIA DE LOS ANGELES TORRES

Half a million Cuban-Americans live in south Florida. Another half-million are spread out across the United States, with important concentrations in New York, New Jersey, Illinois and California. The Republicans woo their votes aggressively, while the Democrats' "Viva Dukakis" campaign has appeared to write them off. That may be a mistake. Popular myth portrays Cuban-Americans as political exiles, economically successful—and conservative. Yet not even in Miami do all Cuban-Americans live up to the stereotype. While the community undeniably bears the scars of thirty years of failed U.S. policies toward Cuba, and of the island government's intolerance toward those who have left, Cuban-American politics are now in transition, and there are many positive signs of change.

Certainly those politics can appear baffling to the outsider. Trapped between two worlds and crossing a number of immigrant and social generations, the community can often be volatile and contradictory. This past spring, for example, Wayne Smith, former chief of the U.S. interests section in Havana, visited Miami to attend a conference on U.S.-Cuban relations. In the early morning hours the day of the meeting, an anti-Castro terrorist bombed the home of the event's organizer, María Cristina Herrera, director of the independent Institute of Cuban Studies. Yet only weeks before, a group of Chicago's Cuban-Americans had met with Smith for a similar discussion. That meeting went off without incident, and the participants, though of many political stripes, agreed that their community would benefit from better U.S.-Cuban relations.

The haunting similarities and mutual intolerance between Havana and Miami only add to the confusion. This spring Miami's Museum of Cuban Art was bombed for exhibiting the work of painters who live in Cuba, and a canvas by the celebrated Afro-Cuban artist Manuel Mendive was publicly burned. Since President Reagan launched Radio Martí in 1985, no Cuban-American artist has been allowed to exhibit in Cuba.

During last summer's Pan-American Games in Indianapolis, the conservative Cuban American National Foundation embarrassed the community with a campaign to persuade Cuban athletes to defect. In return, the head of the Cuban delegation demanded that the popular rock group Miami Sound Machine be barred from playing at the closing ceremony of the games because its lead singer, Gloria Estefan, is Cuban-American, her father a former Batista family employee. Estefan, a source of ethnic pride among Cuban-Americans, was fourteen months old when her parents came to the United States.

Of course, the history of the Cuban-American community in the United States long predates the fall of Fulgencio Batista. Cubans of Spanish, African, Chinese, Jewish, Arab and even Irish descent have been migrating here since the early nineteenth century. Sylvia Griñan, whose cigar-making parents came to Tampa, Florida, in the late 1800s, is a member of the Unión Martí-Maceo, the first association of black Cubans in the United States. Named for two of the island's great nineteenth-century independence heroes, the association was founded in 1904. Today, Griñan still recalls her parents' stories of how, before the Florida Jim Crow laws, black and white immigrants, the backbone of Cuba's independence movement, fought side by side in the Cuban Revolutionary Party. America's leading labor historian, Philip Foner, notes that Cuban-Americans also formed the left wing of the American Federation of Labor in its early years.

During the 1930s, political refugees fled to the United States to escape the dictatorship of Gerardo Machado. Like the refugees who fled Batista in the 1950s, these were politically progressive people. After the revolution, many disaffected middle- and upper-class Cubans did come to the United States, but even the 1960s generation of exiles was not uniformly conservative. They ranged from *batistianos* to disenchanted socialists. In the three decades since then, Cuban immigrants have come from extremely varied class, racial and educational backgrounds, and have chosen to settle in the United States for widely disparate reasons.

Fiercely hostile U.S.-Cuban relations have sharply polarized the community. Lourdes Argüelles, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, who has studied the impact of national security–related activities on Cuban-Americans, warns that as long as Washington's policies legitimize the exiles' right wing, it will continue to wield an influence out of proportion to its numbers. The right-wing dominance of the exile community makes it virtually impossible for opposing views to be heard. Between reruns of 1950s soap operas, Cuban-owned radio stations blast out an unremitting anti-communist tirade.

Maria de los Angeles Torres, who was executive director of the late Chicago Mayor Harold Washington's Commission on Latino Affairs, teaches at De Paul University in Chicago.

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Newspaper and magazine accounts have heralded "Those Amazing Cuban Exiles"—hard-working refugees from Communism making it in the Land of Opportunity. "Horatio Pérez"—the Latin Alger—became a convenient symbol of the failure of the revolution and the renewal of the American dream, in which nonwhite immigrants pull themselves up by their bootstraps. Few headlines ever mentioned the signs outside Miami apartment buildings in the 1960s that read, "No Dogs, No Kids, No Cubans."

The facts show that while many Cubans did make it, many more did not—despite the unprecedented welfare benefits, English-language classes, university and business loans, and covert C.I.A. money that flowed into south Florida. In 1969, the Cuban-born scholar Alejandro Portes questioned the myth of the golden exile when he documented the hardships faced by Cubans who had settled in Milwaukee. Economists at Florida International University (F.I.U.) demonstrated that Cubans had suffered an economic and social decline made worse by employment discrimination.

Cuban-Americans have the highest incorporation into the work force of any Latino community in the United States. Yet their family income, despite being inflated by the high number of wage-earners in most households, is still significantly below the U.S. average.

A lot of Cubans have managed to establish small family-owned businesses—Miami's "miracle enclave"—but F.I.U. economist Antonio Jorge cautions that these businesses have not necessarily been an avenue to success. On the contrary, they may serve to limit long-term economic gains by luring young family members away from the primary labor market and the schools. Indeed, in the past five years, the high-school dropout rate has increased more rapidly among Cuban-American students than among any other Latino group.

These economic and social cleavages have slowly begun to loosen the conservative elite's political and ideological grip on the community. As time passed after the first wave of anti-Castro exiles, fewer and fewer believed that they would ever return to Cuba. This increased the pluralization of the community, a phenomenon first remarked on in the early 1970s by Guarione Díaz, who is today executive director of the Cuban-American Planning Council, a social service agency in the heart of Miami's Little Havana. This pluralization was already evident among Cuban-American university students in the late 1960s. Much like other minorities, they found that political radicalization brought a restructuring of personal identity, which inevitably meant coming to terms with Cuba and its revolution. New publications emerged to reflect their views, such as *Jóvenes Cubanos* ("Young Cubans") and *Areíto*, which today calls for the normalization of U.S.-Cuban relations.

In 1977, under the leadership of the late Lourdes Casal, fifty-five youths returned to Cuba from the United States as the first contingent of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. The formation of the brigade, which still organizes annual visits, was the first significant evidence that the exile community had its own dissidents.

Cuban government officials, who traditionally had stuck to a confrontational attitude toward those who had left the country, were now forced to re-evaluate their policy in the light of their moving encounters with Cuban-American youths who had maintained a sense of national identity despite their years in the United States. As a result, an unprecedented meeting took place in 1978 between representatives of the "Cuban communities abroad" and government officials. It came to be known as the Dialogue. Accords were reached on the release of political prisoners, family reunification, cultural exchanges and travel to the island. In 1979, 120,000 Cuban-Americans went back to visit, a fact that shatters the community's image as an intransigent monolith.

In the same year, the newly formed Cuban-American Committee presented the State Department with a 10,000-signature petition asking for U.S.-Cuban relations to be normalized. Andrés Gómez, now editor of *Areíto*, recalls that there was wide support for this in Miami: "Over 600 women would attend a church in Hialeah and would sing 'Halleluja to Jesus' and 'End the U.S. blockade.'" Some of the women carried .45-caliber revolvers in their purses, for in the same year terrorists opposed to the broad-based Dialogue had placed bombs in the homes and businesses of more than twenty Dialogue participants. They killed two men: In Union City, New Jersey, Eulalio Negrín, who had been the local head of Richard Nixon's Committee to Re-Elect the President; and in Puerto Rico, Carlos Muñiz Varela, one of the founders of the Antonio Maceo Brigade. In 1980 the Federal Bureau of Investigation named Omega 7, the most notorious of the anti-Castro organizations, as the "most dangerous" group operating in the United States. Omega 7 took the credit for the killings.

The rapprochement came to a standstill in 1980, when 120,000 Cubans left the island through the port of Mariel. The anti-Dialogue forces were further strengthened by Rea-

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gan's election, and those sympathetic to normalizing relations began to receive menacing visits from F.B.I. agents at their homes and workplaces.

In 1985, after the launching of Radio Martí, the Cuban government effectively ended the Dialogue when it reversed its policy of allowing Cuban-Americans to visit the island for personal reasons. As Marifeli Pérez-Stable has so convincingly argued in *The Miami Herald*, this reprisal wrongly assumed that all Cuban-Americans supported Radio Martí. She adds that, ironically, the Cuban government's action placed it in the same corner as the Cuban American National Foundation, which had been lobbying the Reagan Administration to halt the family visits.

Despite the new freeze between Havana and Washington, the shifts within the Cuban-American community continued. In 1984, at the first conference on Cuban community studies, scholar Rafael Mozo presented the results of a study showing that the number of Cuban-Americans who planned to settle permanently in the United States had jumped from 53 percent in 1973 to 95 percent in 1979. He also noted that ethnic awareness was on the rise as more Cuban-Americans believed they were victims of discrimination. Alejandro Portes added that he saw "faint signs toward a greater future convergence of Cuban voting patterns with those of other Spanish-origin minorities." In 1983, *The Wall Street Journal* confirmed this when it reported that 47 percent of registered Cuban-American voters were Democrats. An overwhelming percentage of the Miami Cuban-American vote in the 1980 election had still gone to the Republicans, but by 1983 *The Miami Herald* was reporting that those up to 35 years old were more likely to be Democrats or unaffiliated.

These liberalizing tendencies are more visible outside of Miami. An exit poll by the Midwest Voter Registration and Education Project during Chicago's 1983 mayoral election showed that Democrat Harold Washington took almost 50 percent of the Cuban-American vote. In both his election campaigns, the Mayor faced scurrilous attacks from right-wing Cuban-Americans because of his opposition to Radio Martí. They went so far as to accuse Celia Cruz, the staunchly anti-Castro queen of salsa, of being a "Communist sympathizer" for having played at a Washington benefit. Despite this, the Mayor's 1987 share of the Cuban-American vote increased to 80 percent—higher than the proportion he received from Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans. Young Cuban-Americans were also instrumental in organizing Mel King's failed mayoral campaign in Boston, and in 1987 formed a Cuban-American committee for Jesse Jackson.

Despite these shifts, the Cuban-American gatekeepers in the Democratic Party are trying to convince Michael Dukakis that a harder line toward Cuba is the key to the community's vote. "Cuban-Americans, regardless of party affiliation, demand that a candidate or party demonstrate an understanding of the oppressive nature of the Castro regime," wrote Luis Lauredo of the National Hispanic Democrats in the inaugural issue of the group's newspaper. But Cuban-Americans at the new body's founding conference disputed this view. In a moving plea that was greeted with loud applause, Juan Rivero, an Atlanta social worker, said that what he wanted was a party and candidate that would bring peace and normalized relations with Cuba, so that people like him could visit their families and have their relatives travel to the United States.

Support for normalized relations with Cuba is growing. In 1984, at the height of Reagan's popularity, a Cuban-American Committee exit poll during the presidential race found that more than 40 percent of respondents outside Miami were in favor of normalizing relations. In Miami, the figure was 20 percent, rising to 43 percent among those 18 to 24 years old. This summer, the Washington-based Potomac Associates released a poll conducted in the Miami and Union City areas, the two most conservative communities, in which 41 percent of those questioned said they would favor agreements between Cuba and the United States that would lead to better relations. Forty-two percent said that a candidate's support for normalizing relations would either not influence their vote or make them more likely to favor that candidate. These are all potential Democratic voters.

Francisco Aruca, a member of the Democrats' Business Council and president of Marazul Tours, the travel agency that currently handles most tours to Cuba, wholeheartedly agrees that there are important groups in Miami—especially those with relatives on the island—that are keen to see better U.S.-Cuban relations. Carmen Díaz, president of the Miami-based Cuban-American Committee for Family Rights, would like to see agreements on mail, telecommunications and unrestricted travel. Díaz believes that with the large influx of Mariel Cubans, who have more recent ties, there is greater support for this than there was in the 1970s.

Local groups increasingly argue that the community's traditional leaders, in their obsession with toppling Castro, have failed to address the everyday needs of Cuban-Americans. Local groups share that view. The Cuban-American Network/Chicago, for example, founded in 1987, brings together "Cuban-Americans who support a progressive Latino agenda." María Concha Bechily, its president, was one of the 15,000 children brought to the United States in the early 1960s under a State Department–sponsored program called Operation Peter Pan. Today she believes that Cuban-Americans should support Latino employment, equal opportunities and educational and cultural rights—without demanding that other Latino groups, in return, abandon their quest for more equitable U.S. policies toward Latin America.

Xavier Miyares, the only elected Cuban-American delegate to the Democrats' Atlanta convention, agreed in an interview that the party's future support lies in the growing number of liberal and progressive Latinos, including the many Cuban-Americans who want improved relations (either because of family considerations or because they see this as the way to open new political space inside Cuba). These are the voters that the party should be courting. In the process, it would not only find new reservoirs of support, it would also help the Cuban-American community to escape the stranglehold of U.S. national security delusions that have distorted its development for the past thirty years. □

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CUBA: THE DEMOCRATS

A Party Divided And Paralyzed

WILLIAM M. LEOGRANDE

Washington's policy toward Cuba in the 1980s resembles nothing so much as its policy toward China in the 1950s. Cuba's active involvement in Africa and Latin America has made it the bête noire of American foreign policy, just as China's role in Korea and Southeast Asia made it our nemesis in that earlier era.

The United States refuses to recognize Fidel Castro's Cuba, as it refused to recognize Mao Zedong's China, long after the last faint hope of restoring the *ancien régime* has faded. Instead, Washington clings to a tattered policy of isolating Cuba, even though that alienates U.S. allies more than it isolates Havana. The old China hands would recognize the anachronism immediately. And from their own painful experience they would understand instantly that the persistence of Washington's hostility toward Cuba has more to do with domestic politics than with geopolitics.

The damage done by such irrationality reaches beyond individual countries, poisoning policy toward whole regions of the world. Just as Washington's inability to come to terms with the Chinese revolution led the United States into the quagmire of Vietnam, its inability to face up to the Cuban revolution has led it into the morass of Central America. The United States went into Vietnam to block what it feared was Chinese expansionism; today, it is involved in Central America to prevent "another Cuba."

Washington's policy of hostility toward Cuba no longer makes any sense, if it ever did. In the bowels of the foreign policy establishment, opinion is growing that the time has finally come to begin normalizing relations with Cuba. A recent opinion poll conducted by Gallup for Potomac Associates found that 51 percent of a sample of policy-makers and opinion leaders think that past policy toward Cuba has hindered U.S. interests rather than promoted them, and 85 percent favor negotiations leading to full diplomatic ties.

A number of liberal think tanks have mounted campaigns to put Cuba on the agenda of the next President. The Institute for Policy Studies, Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America (PACCA), the International Center for Development Policy (headed by former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White) and the Arca Foundation have all initiated projects promoting normalization. Even militantly centrist groups like the Council on Foreign Relations are talking about Cuba again for the first time in years. Three decades of Washington's unsuccessful efforts to oust or intimidate Fidel Castro speak eloquently of the need to try something different.

But the logic of policy is one thing, the logic of politics another. For Democrats Cuba has become, like China before it, the political equivalent of nitroglycerin. Except for Jesse Jackson, who revels in violating political taboos, no major figure in the Democratic Party openly advocates restoring formal relations between the United States and Cuba.

The reason is fear. Democrats are afraid of a domestic political backlash ignited by the anti-Castro Cuban-American community and the right wing of the Republican Party—the present-day equivalent of the China lobby. What makes this fear so potent are the scars left by McCarthyism. The party that McCarthy charged with twenty years of treason, the party that lost China, is still terrified of being branded soft on Communism. Cuba is Communism in our own backyard.

Congressional Democrats are divided on the issue of Cuba, and hence paralyzed by it. Liberals would support a policy of normalization if the impetus came from the White House, but they are unwilling to take up such a quixotic crusade on their own. Southern conservatives oppose normalization on ideological grounds and would put up a fight if their liberal colleagues broached the subject. Moderates balk at normalization for the same reason that they vacillate on the issue of aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*: fear that in the next election their Republican opponents—never shy about questioning the patriotism of their adversaries—will accuse them of betraying Latin America to Communism.

For Democrats in Florida, this fear is not hypothetical. The growing financial and political might of the Cuban-American community, with its ultraconservative views on foreign policy, especially Cuba, has forced Democrats to scamper toward the right or face political extinction.

With Florida Representative Dante Fascell chairing the Foreign Affairs Committee, Democrats in the House are not going to offer bold initiatives on Cuba. In fact, Congressional Democrats have mounted only the most desultory opposition even to the Reagan Administration's most provocative proposals, such as TV Martí, which would beam propaganda television broadcasts to Cuba by bouncing the signals off a dirigible floating over the Florida Keys.

Policy analysts who advocate normalizing relations with Cuba argue that, outside of Florida at least, the Democrats' fears of a political backlash are ill-founded. When Nixon went to Beijing, they recall, the vaunted China lobby proved to be a paper tiger. Perhaps the same would be true in the case of Cuba if a new Democratic President was willing to wield the power of leadership that comes with the Oval Office. Indeed, there was no firestorm of opposition on the right when President Jimmy Carter moved to improve relations in 1977. Significant support even came from within the Cuban-American community, some of whose leaders opened their own dialogue with the Castro government on prisoner releases, immigration and visitation rights.

Although the dialogue's leaders were vilified by the rejectionist element in their community, a significant number of Cuban-Americans continue to favor a more conciliatory approach. The Potomac Associates poll found that 41 percent of Cuban-Americans favor negotiations between Cuba and

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the United States, and 33 percent hope such talks will lead to normal relations. The general public favors negotiations by the healthy margin of 51 percent in favor to 31 percent against, and past polls suggest that support for such initiatives increases once they get under way.

Still, the political cost-benefit analysis of normalization is daunting. Although Castro would savor Washington's finally recognizing the permanence of his revolution, he is not willing to surrender his foreign policy to achieve it. Both Gerald Ford's and Jimmy Carter's efforts at normalization foundered on these same shoals. Washington expected Castro to swap his internationalism, his commitment to national liberation struggles in Africa and Latin America, for a few hundred million dollars' worth of trade with the United States. It was a bad bargain and Castro wouldn't make it. Cuba sent troops to Angola and Ethiopia, and U.S.-Cuban relations went back into the deep freeze.

The timing of these troop deployments, coming as they did in the midst of efforts to improve bilateral ties, made Presidents Ford and Carter look like patsies. Whenever normalization is discussed in Washington policy circles, the Angola and Ethiopia precedents are cited as a warning: If a U.S. President crawls out on a political limb to improve relations with Cuba, he has no guarantee that Castro won't cut it off. Moreover, a policy of normalizing relations with Cuba will produce few immediate gains to offset its political costs and risks. The Cubans won't throw the Russians out, they won't abandon Nicaragua and they won't discard socialism.

At best, a more normal relationship with the United States would allow Cuba gradually to increase its ties with the West and reduce its dependence on the Soviet Union. Someday this might allow Cuba to manifest more nationalistic and independent policies both at home and abroad. But such benefits will take years to ripen; the political payoff will accrue not to the President who planted the seeds but to his successors.

Even under ideal conditions, the immediate political costs of normalizing relations are real and substantial. While no domestic constituency ardently favors normalizing relations with Cuba, Senator Jesse Helms and his brethren on the Republican right could make life miserable for a new Democratic President who proposed such a step. Although the establishment of full diplomatic relations is a presidential prerogative, ambassadors must be confirmed by the Senate, and the normalization of commercial relations will require Congressional action accepting Cuban compensation for U.S. property nationalized in the 1960s. The White House would have to put significant time, energy and political capital into winning these battles — just as President Carter had to do in order to secure ratification of the Panama Canal treaties. Would a newly elected Democratic President be willing to give Cuba such high priority? Should he?

Governor Michael Dukakis has been very circumspect about his views on Cuba. In his only major campaign speech on Latin America, delivered to the City Club of Chicago in September 1987, he spoke mainly about Central America, mentioning Cuba only in passing. Last May, when a *Los Angeles Times* interviewer asked him specifically about improving relations with Cuba, his instinct was to refocus the question on the safer subject of Central America, which he said would be his first priority. He did finally get around to Cuba, though, saying, "What happens then depends on whether Cuba is willing to take steps to demonstrate that it's prepared to extend human and democratic rights to its people. That's the same principle that we ought to adopt in dealing with any country in this hemisphere."

That was a hard answer to get a handle on. If it meant that internal democratization was a precondition for any improvement in U.S.-Cuban relations, it was even tougher than the Reagan Administration's demand that Cuba break its ties with the Soviet Union. But if it meant that we should treat Cuba by the same standards we use in our relations with the rest of the hemisphere, it perhaps implied normalization, since Cuba is the only Latin American country with which Washington does not have normal diplomatic ties.

When Dukakis has discussed Cuba, it has usually been to criticize the Castro government's record on human rights. "Castro's Cuba has held a proportionately greater number of political prisoners for a longer period of time than any nation on earth," he said in January, citing an Americas Watch report. "The next President should do everything he reasonably can to get those prisoners out. Not by caving in to Castro; but not by ignoring him either." There is, of course, a lot of room for maneuver between caving in to Castro and ignoring him.

Madeleine Albright, a senior foreign

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policy adviser to the governor, described his policy a little more precisely, explaining that Dukakis favors "small steps toward some kind of relationship with Castro"—a policy not vastly different from the piecemeal negotiations on immigration, radio interference and Angola that the Reagan Administration has been engaged in with Cuba over the past year. (Ironically, even as Reagan and Bush are signing accords with Castro, they feel compelled for political reasons to deny that they are involved in any accommodation.)

A President Dukakis would probably extend the dialogue currently under way between Washington and Havana, and might well succeed in resolving some of the less nettlesome bilateral issues. Given Dukakis's preference for diplomatic initiatives in Central America, he might be able to gain Cuban cooperation in obtaining negotiated settlements there, just as Reagan appears to have done in southern Africa. But would he be willing to take the plunge and normalize relations fully?

Dukakis speaks often of his esteem for President John F. Kennedy and likes to compare himself to that other "son of Massachusetts." That's good politics, of course, but the similarities are not entirely invented. Dukakis's choice of Texas Senator Lloyd Bentsen as his running mate reflects the same pragmatic electoral calculus that led Kennedy to forge the Boston-Austin alliance with Lyndon Johnson in 1960 to defeat another incumbent Republican Vice President. Dukakis, like Kennedy before him, is a cautious but shrewd politician.

Kennedy faced a dilemma similar to the one Dukakis would face over Cuba. In *The Best and the Brightest*, David Halberstam describes how, shortly after Kennedy was elected, several of his senior foreign policy advisers urged him to move quickly to change Washington's absurdly unrealistic stance toward Communist China. It was long past time, they argued, to abandon the fruitless policy of hostility and seek a new relationship. Kennedy listened and conceded that the existing policy was indeed a stupid one, but he rejected their counsel. China, he explained with a smile, would have to wait until his second term. □

BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Drawing New Lines

COCO FUSCO

"We are tired of repeating (to the point of singing it) that we don't live in a perfect society."

The quotation comes from an article on the current state of Cuban cinema published in a recent issue of *El Caiman Barbudo* ("The Bearded Alligator"), the monthly journal of the Cuban Communist Youth. Its author alludes to lines in a popular ballad by Nueva Trova star Pablo Milanes, whose concerts often turn into sing-alongs, and whose lyrics have for years been touted as examples of social criticism, Cuban style. The article picks up on a refrain often heard these days in public debate on Cuban culture. The gist of the message is that simply admitting that ideals have not yet been reached is not enough anymore. And not only is it not enough, but it must now be revealed as a symptom of all the impediments to serious public discussion of culture.

The force behind these calls for a thorough evaluation of Cuban culture is a growing number of very vocal young artists and writers. They are members of the much talked-about "young generation" who have come to maturity after the golden age of the 1960s and the lean years of the 1970s. The spirit of artistic innovation that overturned the sleepy visual arts scene of the 1970s has spread to small-scale experimental theater and dance and is now confronting the more overtly politicized arenas of ideological debate and narrative, especially mass cultural forms like cinema. Steering clear of extremism, they are taking the terms of Marxist debate out of the hands of their elders and using them to "rectify" the dogmatism they identify with intellectual timidity and bad bureaucracy. Politically astute, rigorously analytic and aesthetically pluralist, they have emerged in the 1980s as a powerful cultural force.

The very fact that these young people can raise both their issues and their voices is due to other and larger forces at work in Cuban society. In contrast to periods when almost any dissent might have been perceived as sectarianism or worse, recently Fidel Castro has asserted that differences of opinion can and do exist within the party. To expedite "rectification" in a society in which few risk public debate on ideological issues, open-minded elder statesmen such as Carlos Rafael Rodríguez and Armando Hart have taken to explaining that "dialogue" between opposing parties or generations does not signal the loss of party unity, but rather the realization of the dialectic in everyday life.

That artists are now the subjects of much more favorable attention was evident in Castro's appearance at the fourth UNEAC (artists and writers union) Congress last January—his first address to artists since the 1961 "Words to the Intellectuals" speech. A sector that was (and occasionally still is) suspected of individualistic excesses has now been declared the source of the revolution's spiritual wealth. Clarifying the infamous dictum, "Within the revolution, everything; outside the revolution, nothing," with which he concluded his reflections on artistic freedom in 1961, Castro declared that artists can now explore all the possibilities of both form *and* content—within the revolution.

The fourth congress closed with resolutions to restructure the union so as to give the artists a more active role in the administration of culture. Also, twelve years after the establishment of the Ministry of Culture, the process of "professionalizing" the arts has reached the point of granting legitimate status to the "independent" artist, an extremely significant departure from times when those without traditional employment or an international reputation risked the derogatory appellation of "marginal."

Official speeches at the UNEAC Congress and elsewhere this year have singled out the "young generation." Recognized as the creative energy behind the 1980s renaissance in the Cuban visual arts, their efforts attract serious discussion as more and more of their work contains pointed social critique. It is probably no coincidence that these young artists are much in the public eye just when not only Cuban culture but the entire revolutionary process is in need of regeneration. In contrast to tense moments in the past, when the official response was to redouble control, the current interest in and tacit approval of the younger generation are signs of the foresight and

Coco Fusco writes frequently on Cuban art and cultural politics. She is the curator of the currently touring exhibition "Signs of Transition: 80's Art From Cuba."

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sensitivity of many in power.

The members of this cultural vanguard are by no means all alike. Among them are some who were suspended from high school for impertinence or wearing long hair, some who were respected for their outspokenness and others for their exemplary behavior. When the oldest of the young visual artists finished their studies at the beginning of this decade they began producing work that would excite many and enrage a few. They first showed their work in one another's houses, organizing salons and private performances (a longstanding practice in Cuba), and quickly moved to galleries and national and international competitions. Though the work was and continues to be uneven, those early shows drew unprecedented crowds. The reception of these artists in Cuba has always been mixed, but it is both surprising and commendable that even in the early days their efforts were not ignored.

Outside of Cuba, their work, which is extremely varied in style and theme, usually confuses viewers who expect it to take an overtly political form akin to the 1960s posters. Judged on purely formal grounds, most of the work neither attempts nor attains the grandiosity or technical perfection of contemporary "international masters." But the more one is willing to measure the worth of these efforts against the context in which they emerge, the more relevant and even beautiful this art becomes.

These artists are the first in years to systematically reconceptualize the role of art within their society. They are trying in various ways to rethink the relationship between popular culture and high art, and to balance international aesthetic vocabularies with their more local interests and sources. Parody and humor abound in their work, as does a sensitivity to the legacies of surrealism and conceptual art. In one installation by Humberto Castro, fallen gods dive headlong into a sea of shattered mirrors. A series of works on paper by Flavio Garciandia depicts eroticized hammers and sickles engaging in illicit sex in tropical beds of glitter. And Magdalena Campos's vibrantly painted shaped canvases together form a massive version of an IUD. More somber reflections on past and present struggle include Juan Francisco Elso's diminutive José Martí, captured in mid-stride, his clothes in tatters and his body covered with thorns, like Saint Sebastian.

Some of the cooler work done in recent years draws on Santería (Afro-Cu-

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ban religion) and peasant beliefs: streamlined altars, ritual-inflected performances and charcoal sketches retracing native American myths are haunting in their simple elegance. But some of the young artists produce artwork with no Cuban references, bearing no direct relationship to what is ordinarily understood as revolutionary. One painter and art professor, Consuelo Castañeda, who appropriates and juxtaposes parts of classical masterpieces, has a student whose work consists of miniature copies of her "copies" of classical works.

Most recently, the very youngest of the young generation, some still in art school, have expanded this cultural project from one in which formal issues only indirectly imply larger ideological questions, to one in which social criticism is integral to both the form and content of their work. Working individually and in groups, they use graffiti, street performance and an occasional carnivalesque protest at official meetings to attack stale revolutionary rhetoric and the staid conventions of the art world.

There are also those who have not yet finished with the tradition of producing art objects. Referring directly to the most revered revolutionary symbols, many of these artists tinker with social and political taboos. As they juxtapose Cuban ideals with reality, they underscore the discrepancies between them. Recently in *El Caiman Barbudo*, for example, there appeared a reproduction of an enlarged three peso bill with the words "This is not Che" scribbled across it—a playful allusion to Magritte, and a far more serious comment on the discrepancies between the hero and the state-produced image that circulates as official currency.

Stylistically heterogeneous, this generation of artists has an unabashed interest in information about art outside Cuba. What unifies them even more than their artwork, is their strong opposition to any reductive or repressive definition of revolutionary culture. Quick to point to a handful of artists in previous generations who, in their opinion, saved politically engaged art from having a bad name, they nonetheless insist that times have changed, and therefore so must the art of the new era. Weary of the isolationist mentality associated with the worst moments of the 1970s, younger artists and intellectuals enjoy shredding all the arguments about the possibility of an entirely "authentic" Cuban culture (held by some in Cuba to be the goal of revolutionary art).

This reasoning, critic Osvaldo San-

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chez explains, obscures the legacy of foreign influences that have shaped Cuban cultural identity. Sanchez, together with many others, follows the critical approach most eloquently articulated by art historian Gerardo Mosquera, who over the last decade has revived Martí's definition of Cuban cultural identity as the product of *mestizaje* ("hybridization"), thus affirming the coexistence of diverse influences, and in doing so, warding off provincialism. Rather than locating an essential Cuban identity in a past indigenous culture or a homogeneous future one, the most sophisticated commentary and artwork now focuses on the syncretic, synthesizing procedures by which Cubans make the foreign their own. To understand the present, they suggest, is to understand how the material conditions of Cuban socialism force this "recontextualization" to become a part of everyday life. The latest chapter in this procedure is the importation of what some Cuban artists perceive as a "postmodern attitude"—which conveniently removes the stigma of dependence from the act of appropriation, celebrates eclecticism and skeptically disavows the rhetoric of authenticity.

The recent acknowledgment that generational conflicts frequently underlie these aesthetic issues has prompted a fair amount of polemical comment on more delicate ideological questions. The most recent commentary, which appeared in *El Caiman Barbudo*, was aimed at institutional inadequacies and, most importantly, at "dogmatism" as it manifests itself not only in debate but in management of the arts through the overzealous control or negligence of bureaucrats. The importance of publicly addressing the politics of censorship and the reality of self-censorship in Cuba cannot be underestimated, especially when the fields now subject to the greatest scrutiny—film, television, fiction writing and criticism—are those with the largest institutional investment and the largest audiences. They are also those areas of culture that with few exceptions have yet to break out of a long period of stagnation.

Although the cultural intermediaries or bureaucrats are regularly criticized, they have recently made some shrewdly nonconservative responses to potentially inflammatory incidents. When a clamor arose over the disappearance of a revealing documentary on Soviet youth from last year's well-attended Soviet film series, it reappeared shortly afterward on Cuban television. And after a group of nonprofessionals performed their politically charged experimental drama, *The Fourth Wall*, to dozens of audiences packed into a private home, they were invited to move their play to a theater and continue. The decision to close a young artist's solo exhibition last winter because of "irreverent" use of political symbols was made, it seems, by local political representatives, and not by the cultural ministry.

What these discussions mean for the future of Cuban culture and the careers of some of its brightest creators no one is able or willing to say. Just how permanent this climate of openness will be is anybody's guess at this early stage. Just how detailed the analyses of past errors and misguided interference can actually become is another open question. It is one thing to denounce past bureaucratic mismanagement, and it is quite another to insist that conflicts between artists, administrators and politicos be systematically aired in public, and that individuals be held accountable. And finally, if the pressures that shape what can and cannot be expressed within the revolution are brought into the realm of public discourse, does this mean that other social and political taboos will be dismantled?

The issues that may be resolved in Cuba's culture will always remain far more complex and recalcitrant in other aspects of Cuban life. Still, the daunting ability of the young artists to combine level-headed political acumen, creative energy and faith in the potential of their country and themselves is nothing to pass over lightly. This is not to say that the entire generation shares these qualities or these opinions. Like any other art world, there are idealists, opportunists and dozens of other types. But when the boldest of them raise their voices, what they are saying is strikingly sane; and they are all, without a doubt, the children of the revolution. □

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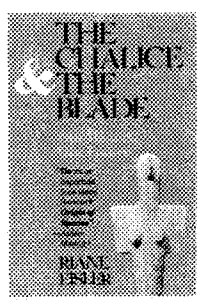

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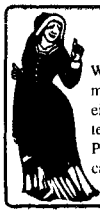

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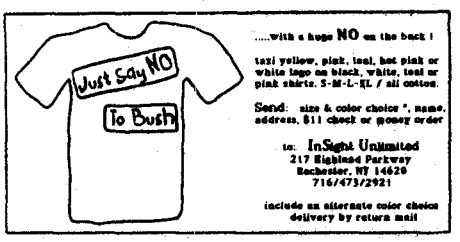
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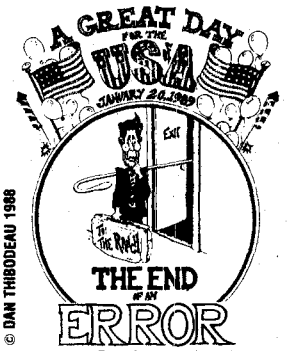

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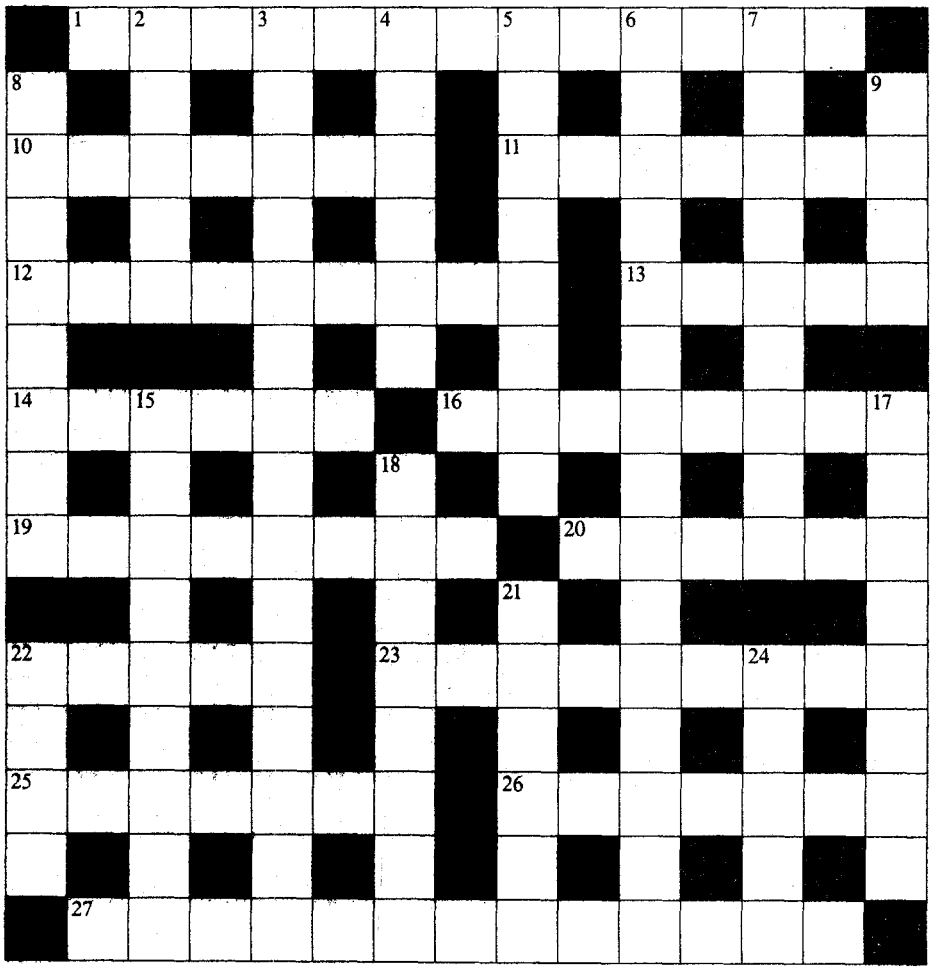
I	■	O	■	U	■	M	■	A	■	E	■	I	■	C
B	U	S	S	T	O	P	■	S	L	A	M	M	E	R
L	■	E	■	O	■	H	■	T	■	N	■	O	■	O
E	L	F	■	F	O	O	L	O	F	■	O	N	E	S
■	■	O	■	M	■	R	■	F	■	C	■	O	■	T
F	E	R	R	Y	M	A	N	■	B	O	N	S	A	I
A	■	■	■	W	■	E	■	B	■	M	■	■	■	C
L	A	N	D	A	U	■	B	A	S	E	N	J	I	S
S	■	E	■	Y	■	J	■	R	■	H	■	U	■	■
E	D	E	N	■	G	E	M	I	N	I	■	G	A	B
S	■	D	■	N	■	T	■	T	■	T	■	G	■	L
T	E	L	L	E	R	S	■	O	T	H	E	L	L	O
E	■	E	■	W	■	E	■	N	■	E	■	E	■	W
P	O	S	T	S	■	T	H	E	C	R	I	S	I	S

X-523

Crossword Puzzle No. 2214

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Asking for a comparatively American dish? That's neat! (5-3,5)
10 There's something catchy in the old instrument—opening like a crescent. (7)
11 Time certain to be responsible for a "rubbing out." (7)
12 The theater attendants on strike? (Shows a proper exit!) (6,3)
13 Is her break-up due to the children, possibly? (5)
14 Scared of this? They reputedly come high in Lebanon. (6)
16 Sing seasonally in a state associated with the moon? (8)
19 They might patch the film together, but get a bad press about the public having no place to drink. (8)
20 Beats badly (in vulgar fashion)—the little stinkers! (6)
22 and 9 down The bottoms of certain flowers, but the rest would certainly be watery there. (5,4)
23 Didn't remember 10, sometimes said to be not this, when gone. (9)
25 Knowledge of a popular nature connected with flowers, with perhaps fatal allurement. (7)
26 See 22 down
27 Somewhat irritated with a broken nose, take notice! (If something does, one gets the general idea.) (5,4,4)

DOWN

2 See 22 down
3 Things that go round in the writing profession? (8,7)
4 Continue to give thanks, one hears, for what the lion does to lesser beasts. (4,2)
5 Such things will come in time, though the net value may vary. (8)
6 Get down to the basic structure—at least get down to certain popular music with one of the "weavers" classically. (5,4,6)
7 It might take a lot of study and research to get it. (9)
8 Makes an impatient movement perhaps, coming close to being ruffled when this. (8)
9 See 22 across
15 One who brings the groceries—although what one does might be free. (9)
17 A buzzer dispatched inside when one is missing? (8)
18 Strictly speaking, a singular bit of handwriting on the wall—but you can make "go far" fit! (8)
21 Thumb through the books—and be around when there are some arguments! (6)
22,26 across and 2 Danish accompanied by a fruit drink? Unflappable composure might be implied. (4,4,3,5)
24 Cronus, for example, went off like a rocket! (5)

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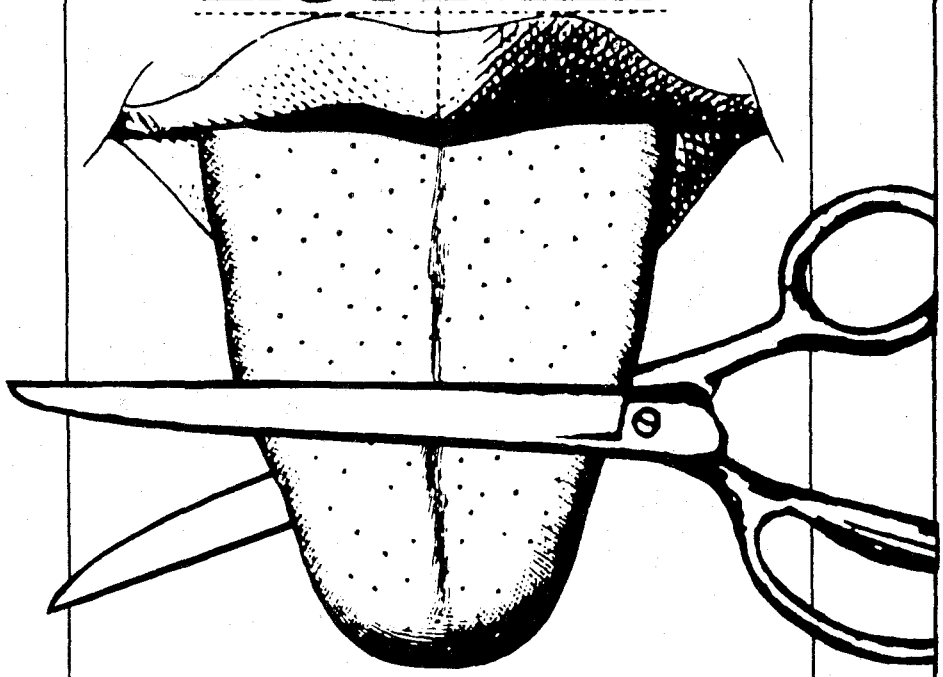

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